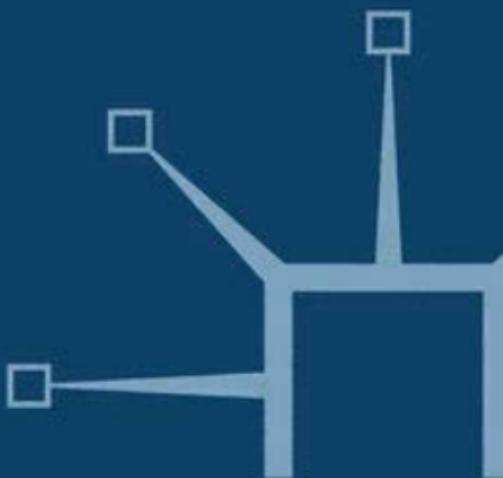# Conflict and Compromise in East Germany, 1971–1989

A Precarious Stability

Jeannette Z. Madarász

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A Precarious Stability

Jeannette Z. Madarász

palgrave
macmillan

To my parents, Albert and Bärbel Madarász

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Contents

Preface

In this book, the political positions and social situations of four social groups have been analysed to highlight two main characteristics of the socialist society in the GDR: complexity and mutual compromise. Without forgetting the political restriction and repression that were a defining part of this society, this book observes the stability of the regime until it dissolved quickly from 1987 onwards. Structures, attitudes, relationships, and tensions within the East German society are examined and used to analyse wider political and social tendencies.

Main issues within this context are the political divide between Erich Honecker and Walter Ulbricht, the inability of the centralised state to control an increasingly complex society, the continued social divisions based on privileges, and the lines of communication that maintained the exchange between state and society and thereby stability. In turn, those issues touch upon themes that have been under-researched to date. The position of Christian writers and Christian women comes to mind in particular but the change in their mental attitude and the political relevance of literature also receive attention. Furthermore, the role of specific mass organisations and institutions are analysed to define the political system more clearly; not only its limitations but also to highlight the opportunities the centralised structures provided for the population.

Acknowledgements

Glossary

	Abteilung Frauen	Department for women
	Abteilung Jugend	Department for youth
	Abteilung Kirchenfragen	Department for Church issues
	Abteilung Kultur	Department for culture
	Abteilung Volksbildung	Department for mass education
AdK	Akademie der Künste	Academy of Arts
APW	Akademie der Pädagogischen Wissenschaften	Academy of Pedagogic Sciences
AdW	Akademie der Wissenschaften	Academy of Sciences
	Amt für Jugendfragen	Youth office
	Arbeitsgruppe Frauen	Working group women
AJA	Arbeitsgruppe Junger Autoren	Working group for young authors
	Arbeitsgruppe Kirchenfragen	Working group for Church issues
	Baueinheiten/ Bausoldaten	Special units within the NVA for conscientious objectors
	Berliner Begegnung	Writers from both Germanys discussing peace issues
	Bitterfelder Weg	Literary policy in the 1950s/60s
BRD/FRG	Bundesrepublik Deutschland	Federal Republic of Germany
CDU	Christlich–Demokratische Union	Christian Democratic Party
DFD	Demokratischer Frauenbund Deutschlands	Democratic Union of Women
DDR/GDR	Deutsche Demokratische Republik	German Democratic Republic
DIJ	Deutsches Jugendinstitut	German Youth Institute

	Durchherrschte Gesellschaft (Lüdtke)	Society that is ruled throughout
	Einheit von Wirtschafts- und Sozialpolitik	Union of economic and social policy
	Entdifferenzierte Gesellschaft (Meuschel)	De-differentiated society
EOS	Erweiterte Oberschule	Preparatory school for university
	FDJ–Aufgebot	Projects of the FDJ in celebration of various GDR anniversaries
	Frauenausschuß	Representative body in factories
	Frauenförderungsplan	Programme to further women's professional education
	Frauenkommission	Commission for female workers
FDJ	Freie Deutsche Jugend	Free German Youth
FDGB	Freier Deutscher Gewerkschaftsbund	Trades Union
	Fürsorgediktatur (Jarausch)	Welfare dictatorship
DSF	Gesellschaft der Deutsch–Sowjetischen Freundschaft	Society for German–Soviet Friendship
HV Verlage und Buchhandel	Hauptverwaltung Verlage und Buchhandel	Main administrative body for publishers and book sellers
	Institut für Meinungsforschung	Opinion research institute
	Jugendausschüsse	Youth committee
	Jugendbrigade	Youth brigade
	Jugendkommission	Commission for youth issues
	Jugendweihe	State ceremony similar to confirmation in Church
	Kirchenkampf	Struggle between the Churches and the state
	Kulturbund	Cultural Union

KGB	Komitet Gosudarstvennoi Bezopastnosti	Soviet security and intelligence service
MFH	Ministerium für Fach- und Hochschulbildung	Ministry for Higher Education
MfK	Ministerium für Kultur	Ministry for Culture
MfS	Ministerium für Sicherheit	Ministry for Security
MfV	Ministerium für Volksbildung	Ministry for Mass Education
	Ministerrat	Council of Ministers
NVA	Nationale Volksarmee	National Armed Forces
	Nischengesellschaft (Gaus)	Niche society
PDS	Partei des Demokratischen Sozialismus	Party of Democratic Socialism – successor party to the SED
	Pfarrerbund	Association of pastors
	Pfingsttreffen	Annual meeting of young people
POS	Polytechnische Oberschule	Polytechnic High School
SV	Schriftstellerverband	Writers' Union
SED	Sozialistische Einheitspartei Deutschlands	Communist Party of the GDR
	Staatsrat	Council of State
	Staatssekretär für Kirchenfragen	State secretary for Church issues
	Trabant	Car manufactured in the GDR
ZIJ	Zentralinstitut für Jugendforschung	Central Institute for Youth Research
ZK SED	Zentralkomitee der SED	Central Committee of the SED
ZR FDJ	Zentralrat der FDJ	Central Council of the FDJ
ZZF	Zentrum für Zeithistorische Forschung in Potsdam	Centre for research on contemporary history in Potsdam
	Zentrum Junger Autoren	Centre for young writers

MfS vocabulary

AIG	Auswertungs- und Informationsgruppe	Group for Analysis and Information
AKG	Auswertungs- und Kontrollgruppe	Group for Analysis and Control
HA	Hauptabteilung	Main Department
IM	Inoffizieller Mitarbeiter	Unofficial Employee
PID	Politisch–idelogische Diversion	Political and ideological diversion
ZAIG	Zentrale Auswertungs- und Informationsgruppe	Central Group for Analysis and Information

Church vocabulary

	Berliner Bischofskonferenz	Executive body of the Catholic Church in the GDR
	Bluesmessen	Mass celebration specifically designed for young people
BEK	Bund Evangelischer Kirchen in der DDR	Union of Protestant Churches in the GDR
EKD	Evangelische Kirche Deutschlands	Protestant Church of Germany
ESG	Evangelische Studentengemeinde	Student group within a Protestant parish
EVA	Evangelische Verlagsanstalt	Publishing House of the Protestant Churches
FAK Mann und Frau	Facharbeitskreis Zusammenarbeit Mann und Frau in Kirche, Familie und Gesellschaft	Working group promoting cooperation between women and men
	Frauenarbeit	Organisation working on women's position within the Churches
	Frauenhilfe	Organisation giving support to women in the Protestant Churches

	Jugendpfarrer	Vicars for groups of young Christians
	Junge Gemeinde	Groups of young members of a congregation
KKL	Konferenz der Evangelischen Kirchenleitungen in der DDR	Conference of the governing bodies of the Protestant Churches
	Offene Jugendarbeit	Youth programme of the Protestant Churches
	Pfarrfrauenarbeit	Organisation working on position of and with pastors' wives
	Studentenpfarrer	Vicars for student groups
WCC	Weltkirchenrat	World Church Council

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Introduction

Memorial for A.W.

> Response from Angelika Woite, 21 years of age, worker in the
> VEB Textilreinigung
> Potsdam-Rehbrücke:
> YOU ARE WRONG ASKING ME
> I AM NOT SUITABLE FOR THE NEWSPAPER
> I AM NOT A GOOD EXAMPLE
> I WILL SAY MY OPINION
>
> (Adolf Endler)[1]

Introduction

The existence of the GDR for forty years in relative stability and its rapid
collapse in 1989 pose a major problem for which neither historians nor
sociologists nor politicians nor the media have yet found a convincing
explanation. Concepts such as the totalitarian approach and terms
such as 'durchherrschte Gesellschaft' (Alf Lüdtke), 'entdifferenzierte
Gesellschaft' (Sigrid Meuschel), and 'Fürsorgepolitik' (Konrad Jarausch)
have failed to provide a comprehensive analysis of the processes that
upheld a dictatorial regime for four decades and, in the same instance,
prepared its failure. Nevertheless, the last three approaches to GDR
history were of particularly great value to the field by delivering
new insights into GDR society and the totalitarian model certainly
encouraged heated discussions on the subject. However, none of the
currently available studies seem able to adequately describe the com-
plexities of life in the GDR that stabilised the regime by circumventing
its totalitarian ambitions.

One possible way to achieve such a description is a detailed analysis of political and social processes within the GDR but, crucially, seen in the wider context of four major social groups that touch on essential aspects of GDR society. By looking at young people, women, writers, and Christians with regard to relevant central policy and their institutional context, social diversity, internal tensions, channels of communication, and achieved compromises, circumstances are explored which induced a process of give and take. Furthermore, the overlaps of these social groups, for example young writers with links to the Churches, harboured tensions, which eventually led to and carried the events of 1988 and 1989. This book argues that the GDR was stable until 1987. Under Honecker, a constantly negotiated process of mutual concessions, based on the strength of the social groups' positions, stabilised the regime. This process was interrupted in the late 1980s by international and domestic developments, a turn of events that does not invalidate the previous stability.

The four groups

The selected social groups represent the four principal sections of 'outsiders' in the sense of their ability to exist partly beyond the political structures erected by the Socialist Unity Party of Germany (SED). They also offer a good cross-section of society and constitute important points of potential resistance to the regime. At the same time, the combination of age, gender, religious affiliation, and profession marked out the social position of a person quite closely within the GDR and therefore affords a remarkably good vantage point from which to analyse both the structures of the political set-up and the social diversity complementing it. The analysis focuses on structural aspects of the institutional framework that surrounded and shaped the four groups. It also pays attention to their social characteristics, behavioural patterns, and attitudes beyond the given structure of the regime. In the book, efforts at communication between the groups and the regime are emphasised to show the general willingness on both sides of the political divide to cooperate in the interest of a functioning, if not entirely stable, society.

Young people, women, writers, and Christians were favoured by the regime. Young people up to the age of 26 years received special support in terms of education and social benefits. Furthermore, they enjoyed some political leeway based on the regime's conviction that this social group represented the future of the socialist society but was easily influenced by Western propaganda, a serious problem for the GDR

authorities because of the German–German rapprochement during the 1970s. The young generations of the 1970s and 1980s grew up with the knowledge of their favoured position but also with a tendency to circumvent or rebel against a tightly organised institutional structure. Consequentially, the need to communicate with the regime was a pronounced feature of this social group.

Similarly, East German writers felt not only the intellectual need but also a strong responsibility to address both the regime and other social groups. Most writers experienced some degree of favouritism expressed by material and political privileges. Furthermore, the most eminent writers were in a position to criticise the regime directly, which was a unique privilege outside the highest echelons of the political elite. To keep the favour of the regime, compromises were made that undermined the integrity of the writing community in the long term but enabled criticism to travel beyond the boundaries of social and political affiliation.

The regime favoured women through social provisions that helped them to combine family responsibilities with a professional career. The resulting financial independence spurred mental developments among women which included a self-sufficient approach to parenthood and a growing feeling of worthiness that, however, never entirely defeated continued patriarchal tendencies in both the public and private sphere. The pressure to be successful regarding both family and career combined with a growing feeling of confidence made women one of the prime groups for potential resistance to the regime although loyalty was widespread.

The Christian community represents the 'outsider' par excellence in the GDR. The Churches were the only institutions that existed independently of the state. Loyalty to the anti-fascist aspects of the regime influenced attitudes although their integrative value was greatly diminished over the years by continuous persecution of the Churches and their members. The privilege enjoyed by East German Christians was provided by the enforcement of their outsider status. The separation from the regime encouraged the Churches' consistent interest in international connections. Communication, compromise and co-existence defined the existence of the Christian community in the GDR. However, the Churches were also a major source of criticism and resistance to the regime.

All four social groups have specific positions within the GDR. They represent rough categories, which, in reality, are more differentiated and contain dissidents who consciously exclude themselves from any concept of group. The four groups can be divided into two sections defined

by an element of choice. Whilst the members of both the writing and the Christian community chose their affiliation to their respective groups, both gender and age are a given. Furthermore, both Christians and writers are treated as minority groups within the GDR.[2] Women amount to slightly more than half the population and young people in the age group 14 to 26 make up one-fifth of the population between 1971 and 1989.[3] The inclusion of two broad social groups into the project, youth and women, allows the author to connect various areas of GDR society and to contrast a specific experience with a more general one. The four groups complement each other and together form a solid and varied base for the analysis. The differences between the groups are used in the comparison to penetrate deeper into the make-up of GDR society. Furthermore, cross-sections of society such as the young female writer with a Christian background give a particular insight into both the dynamics and internal structures of society. Young writers with a Christian background, for example, fell easily outside the structures provided by the state when they decided to follow a religious orientation within their work. Furthermore, they did not receive much support from Church institutions. Their lack of visibility is still apparent in the minimal amount of relevant material available and reflects the difficulties they encountered. The situation of such cross-sections of society reflects both the possibilities and limitations of this society.

By using a comparative approach, a concentrated picture will evolve which highlights tensions and compromises but also the glue that, beyond the impact of external forces, held the state together: acceptance. Acceptance in this context contains both a sense of learning to live with a specific situation which cannot easily be changed in its fundamental characteristics and support of specific aspects of the state. In the last twenty years of the GDR's existence, the majority of the population accepted the socialist dictatorship. The GDR presents itself as a viable political and social system. In terms of political ideology, it follows a clear and, at least on the surface, logical path – the Marxist–Leninist doctrine. During the early postwar years, the socialist state saw itself as an exhilarating alternative to the Nazism of the Third Reich. It promised the achievability of a better world on earth, and this vision fascinated many, even as late as the 1970s and 1980s.[4] In terms of social concepts, fairness and equality seem values worth fighting for. The concept of a socialist state offered much to the majority of the 16.4 million people who lived in the GDR in 1989. Those, especially, who grew up within the education system of the GDR and had never experienced another political system, except perhaps the Third Reich, were influenced by socialist concepts.

Historiography

Following the collapse of the GDR in 1989 there was widespread, almost universal, condemnation of the system and historical debate experienced a strong politicisation. Partly, this biased approach relied on the new evidence emerging from the files of the former Ministry for Security (MfS). The GDR became stigmatised as a totalitarian regime, propped up by Soviet power, repression, and terror.[5] Many historical studies on the subject used emotive terms, which created 'heroes, victims and villains', as Mary Fulbrook has pointed out.[6] This moralising approach to history culminated in a procession of books concerned primarily with guilt and the exoneration of those who found themselves amongst the guilty.[7] Historical debate was temporarily based on a victor mentality, which contested the validity of the lives of those who had lived within an ideological framework that, in 1989, appeared to have been proven morally and politically wrong. The totalitarian approach in particular continuously used emotive language and inculpatory categories.[8]

Totalitarianism

The totalitarian approach taken by Klaus Schroeder, Klaus-Dietmar Henke, and others has probably been the most controversial attempt to explain political and social processes within the GDR. This historical model considers the GDR in terms of its repressive and coercive nature by taking a view from the top down. By paying much attention to the political hierarchy and structures, it neglects many instances of differentiation and variety, which circumvented the political framework. They have been highlighted by other approaches.[9] With the totalitarian model there is a danger of taking a similarly restricted view of society as to that taken by the political elite of the GDR. Furthermore, an image of constant civil war is projected which constructs a compelling inevitability of the state's constant decline and eventual fall.[10] This image of doom, however, underestimates the possibility of individualisation, resistance, and refusal that led to a distinct pattern of social and political development. This continual pattern of ascent and fall was paralleled by the population's participation in the regime and reflected in opinion polls, contents of petitions, and literary texts – evidence, which is more likely to give an insight into attitudes and opinions of the average citizen. In relation to the last two decades of the GDR's existence it is more appropriate to highlight not just the crises but also the successes which the state experienced. These were reflected in the population's loyalty to it.

The main problem with regard to the totalitarian model is the many compromises and exceptions that are made in order to apply it to developments within the GDR. In fact, no uniform characterisation of totalitarianism exists, leaving the entire concept unclear and difficult to apply. In particular recent arguments which allow totalitarian regimes to develop a toleration of pluralist tendencies for tactical reasons have undermined the coherence of the model and limited its relevance.[11]

In the context of interrelations between a regime and its population, advocates of the totalitarian model generally focus on a regime's total authority or claim to total control of a society.[12] In the GDR, the political structures provided the regime with total power, at least in theory. However, as representatives of the totalitarian model admit, this claim to total political, economic, and social control was not realised in Honecker's East Germany. Real socialism is described as, at the most, an approximation to a totalitarian society.[13] Classical attributes of the totalitarian model, such as a regime's aim to create a new type of human being and to defeat the ideological enemy (Hannah Arendt), the introduction of a new social ideology and the assertion that the totalitarian model only makes sense in comparison to the democratic model (Martin Draht), are recognisable features of GDR history.[14] However, two of the most important aspects of the totalitarian approach are the ambitions of the regime and the lack of autonomy for the individual human being in the context of such a society. The post-classical totalitarian model, in particular, operates on the basis that a totalitarian regime will never be able to create a totalitarian society. This assertion dramatically limits the strength of the model while making it difficult to tie it down to a number of specific characteristics that can be analysed. If it is assumed that a state is totalitarian because of its ambitions alone, without considering historical realities and specifically the limitations of a political system, then the regime's one-dimensional view has been accepted. This approach ignores both the differentiation and the participation of the population, which ensured some autonomy for the individual and made society viable.

Ferenc Heller has acceded that totalitarian states can develop a certain tolerance of pluralism for tactical reasons.[15] Furthermore, in the 1950s Karl W. Deutsch pointed out that totalitarian regimes are necessarily doomed to fail because of both the high demands on central control and the regimes' dependency on the population's willingness to support the political apparatus ('Folgebereitschaft').[16] However, if the state is both dependent on the participation of the population, when expedient, tolerating minority beliefs and traditions, and unable to control all aspects

of society, serious doubts on the applicability of the term 'totalitarian' must arise. The totalitarian ambitions of its leaders cannot be sufficient to make a state totalitarian. Too many compromises and exceptions shape the totalitarian model, making it extremely difficult to critique.[17]

Furthermore, the totalitarian model takes a biased approach to the role of the population; it defines it as a mass that is dependent on outside influences, especially those coming from the state itself or from outside the GDR, for example the West German market economy. Thereby, the totalitarian model underrates the independent activities, initiatives, and attitudes of the population, which eventually led to the events of 1989. The crux of the problem is the question of the GDR's stability, which was based on the participation of the population, but which was cancelled when the majority withdrew their support of the regime in 1989.

Although some aspects of the totalitarian approach are useful to the interpretation of East German society, the details of life in the GDR which were most relevant to the population, do not receive sufficient attention. Limitations of power, compromises and lines of communication made life acceptable and liveable for the majority of people by providing some leeway for the individual, whether in the shape of watching Western TV channels or writing petitions. The existence of such possibilities stabilised the political system by allowing individual initiative. Millions were members of mass organisations and bloc parties, where they influenced decisions. Functionaries of the SED at the local level were able to consolidate their individual powers and deviate from central policies. These were opportunities, which reached beyond the totalitarian ambitions of the regime and allowed many to invest hope in the GDR. During the 1970s and 1980s, many links existed that connected state and society. The compromises introduced under Honecker enabled a stable relationship between specific parts of society and the state. Social security, the anti-fascist myth, and privileges were crucial to this system. Tensions existed everywhere, complete antagonism, however, only in very small and isolated parts of society and the culture of constant grumbling ('Meckerkultur') provided a constant outlet for critical pressure in the form of the petitions.[18]

The totalitarian model is based on a variety of arguments and not all its advocates agree on their applicability and pertinence to a regime's political character.[19] However, specific aspects are central to a closer definition of a diffuse model. In particular, the issues of total structural control and a lack of differentiation and participation within society constitute basic tenets of this approach. By focusing on the political

theory as propagated by the regime, it overlooks developments and processes that stabilised society. Such factors determined life for the majority of the population.

Useful alternatives

During the mid-1990s, historians such as Monika Kaiser, Thomas Lindenberger, and Peter Hübner worked on micro-studies, which were concerned primarily with the practical experience of living in the GDR up to and including the dramatic year of 1989.[20] The efforts made by historians associated with the 'Zentrum für Zeithistorische Forschung' (ZZF) in Potsdam provided an insight into the realities of life in the GDR. Monographs on specific sections and issues were essential in the development of a differentiated image of the GDR, as they examine detailed processes of everyday life and highlight the various dimensions of this society.[21] First attempts at constructing an overview have helped to highlight specific sections and events within GDR society, supporting the notion of complexity crucial to this book.[22] The GDR survived for forty years, a respectable age within its historical context. It harboured complex social structures and was based on compromises that stabilised the country sufficiently for it to survive various fundamental crises. However, even after a decade of research no consensus has been reached as to the mentality characteristic of this state.

   Various theses have been developed and applied to the GDR over the last decade, many of which are concerned with both the complexity of GDR society and the nature of relations between state and society. The concept of 'durchherrschte Gesellschaft', a society in which political power prevails throughout, presents a recent approach to GDR history.[23] Alf Lüdtke used this term to highlight the complex relations between state and society exemplified by institutions such as the petition system. Lüdtke focuses on the regime's attempt at total control but shows limitations of its actual control, for example the continuity of traditional attitudes towards work.[24] Thereby, he was able to criticise crucial aspects of the totalitarian approach.[25] However, although Lüdtke pays much attention to developments within society, he underestimates the significant gaps that existed within both central policy and the institutional framework. Those were specifically exploited by the population and accommodated diverse social and cultural developments. In particular, Lüdtke's concept does not acknowledge the mutual compromises reached between the regime and large parts of society. Arguably, over four decades the system functioned because of the involvement and

active participation of the majority of the population. Furthermore, Schroeder has pointed out that the term 'durchherrschte Gesellschaft' has not yet been sufficiently defined.[26] Ilko-Sascha Kowalczuk indicated a danger for the concept to be interpreted as standing very close to the totalitarian approach as it suggests an omnipresence of the regime.[27]

Other approaches have differed particularly in their estimation of the differentiation that was possible within East German society. Whilst Detlef Pollack highlights the importance of informal structures within society and the systematic contribution made by the informal groups to the development in the GDR during the 1980s, others play down the existence of differentiation and even deny its relevance to the history of the GDR. Sigrid Meuschel in particular describes GDR society during the 1980s as a society without differentiation ('entdifferenzierte Gesellschaft').[28] In her approach, social 'Entdifferenzierung' is rated more highly than the existing social differences without denying, however, the difference in power between the political elite and the population. Rather, Meuschel alleges that the levels of power deviated so much that the social differences among the population had only secondary relevance. Heike Solga, in contrast, develops a theoretical approach based on class, which shows the significance of social differentiation within the GDR.[29] The events of 1989 are difficult to explain if the complexity of society in the GDR during the 1970s and 1980s is not taken into account. Even the political elite recognised the complex nature of society to some extent as it tried to apply compromises suited specifically to individual groups and subgroups within society. The groups that developed under the protective cover of the Protestant Churches, the Prenzlauer Berg scene, the difference of life experienced by the Christian community, and the privileges of established writers were just some instances that showed the varied nature of GDR society. They are further analysed in the following chapters. Without those differentiations, the complex relations between state and society cannot be described adequately and the longevity of the GDR combined with the events of autumn 1989 become incomprehensible.

Finally, another approach focuses on the softer methods used by Honecker in the 1970s and 1980s. Konrad Jarausch introduced the term 'Fürsorgediktatur', the concept of a dictatorship concerned with welfare as a means of stabilising the political system.[30] Many historians have used the term 'Fürsorge' in relation to GDR politics. Irene Dölling, for example, applied it to the emancipatory policies introduced under Honecker. Klaus-Dietmar Henke employed it as part of his model, which differentiates between hard and soft mechanisms of power, describing

'Fürsorgepolitik' and measures such as the petition system as a 'soft' approach to power politics.[31] In a similar vein, Jarausch hopes to 'capture both the egalitarian aspirations of socialism and its dictatorial practice'.[32] Based to some extent on the work of the ZZF, he has recognised the complexity of East German society and the concept of compromise that shaped relations between the state and society.[33] Nevertheless, the concept of a 'Fürsorgediktatur' underestimates the involvement of society with the state and the mutuality of the compromises that were made and that were not limited to questions of welfare.[34] Although social security was important to East Germans and defined crucial aspects of their relationship to the regime, the feeling of being kept safe ('Geborgenheit') did not encompass all aspects of life in the GDR. Furthermore, it is neither able to account for the underlying tensions within society nor explain the rapid collapse of the GDR.

The models that have been developed so far have not been able to reach an agreement on the main features of the GDR. In addition, the extent and depth of historical and sociological studies on specific social groups differs greatly. In the following, an overview will be given of relevant research.

Generally, much has been written in the last decade relating to the history of the GDR and there is no shortage of secondary material. However, the discussions surrounding the totalitarian approach have also shown that the history of the GDR, specifically in Germany, still constitutes a political question especially with regard to institutions such as the Churches, the CDU, and the SV or to specific prominent personalities such as the former president of the SV Hermann Kant, Christa Wolf, and Manfred Stolpe. To highlight the differences and developments in this area, it is necessary to consider the current position of historical research in relation to each of the four groups.

Writers

The standard work on literature in the GDR is still Wolfgang Emmerich's *Kleine Literaturgeschichte der DDR*, which provides a comprehensive analysis of GDR literary history.[35] Emmerich's ability to combine both political and cultural developments is outstanding. It is especially appropriate to the East German situation. Emmerich's periodisation of GDR literature and culture into pre-modern, modern, and post-modern has been followed by others who feel that the differences between the cultures of East and West Germany gradually faded as both literatures became more concerned with questions of women's emancipation,

peace, and environmental issues. Based on this process, some cultural historians conclude that East German literature began to aspire to Western standards of modernity.[36] As Julia Hell points out, this approach favours modernism and condemns early GDR literature to the dark ages of social realism. It relies on an underlying teleology. Emmerich sees the emancipation of authors' voices from the GDR's official political and aesthetic discourse in the writers' mastery of the modernist technique and the emergence of a feminist consciousness.[37] However, the development of literature in the GDR constituted a specific reaction to East German realities and difficulties and can be seen in those terms.

Authors' attitudes towards, awareness of, and dealings with censorship institutions in the GDR, for example, had a huge impact on literature. Problems such as self-censorship for political reasons and the ambivalent attitude to censorship, seen both as limitation and stimulation, applied to every author living in the GDR. Increasingly during the 1980s, writers were using literary code, accommodated by specific techniques, which included the utilisation of genres such as science fiction and mythology. Irmtraud Morgner's use of fairy tales, legends, and myths (*Amanda*, 1983), Franz Fühmann's interest in science fiction (*Saiäns Fiktschen*, 1981), and Christa Wolf's utilisation of mythology (*Kassandra*, 1983), even the Prenzlauer Berg phenomenon, were partly a result of this specific situation.[38] Stimulation through market requirements and censorship on the grounds of morality or human rights cause problems on an altogether different scale. The MfS had began to take an interest in the literary community, even creating the department 'HA XX/7' in 1969, a department specially designed to control cultural activities. Issues such as gender roles in the GDR, the peace issue, or generational conflict also contributed to an author's inspiration and textual intention but, again, can be seen from a GDR perspective. Unfortunately, the initial retrospective view of GDR literature neglected such considerations. Typically three approaches were taken in its historical analysis. First, the assumption was made that a confrontation with existing socialism could only produce disenchantment and rejection. Secondly, a feeling of nostalgia grew for the past that had provided clear guidelines on literary history and political requirements. Finally, GDR literature has experienced not only much public self-flagellation but also exculpation. It is a widespread phenomenon that GDR literature is read with hindsight and not from within a GDR context.[39]

The meaning of literature generally goes beyond the circumstances in which it was written and can be interpreted in many ways. However, many prominent writers who were living in the GDR repeatedly stated

the direct relation between their work and their lives in a dictatorship and their intention to comment on the society that surrounded and shaped them. This approach was not necessarily driven by oppositional attitudes, rather it aimed to compensate for the seriously limited role of the media and to create a public sphere in which taboo subjects were presented and discussed.[40] An appreciation of this attitude is crucial to an understanding of the position of the writers' community in the GDR.

In this specific area of historical research, more attention is required in relation to Christian literature and the isolation Christian writers experienced within the GDR. Furthermore, the importance of writers' texts to other sections of society needs to be explored more widely. This focus will highlight the complex interrelations within East German society.

Women

The situation of women in the GDR is a controversial issue that pitches the theoretical framework of equality against the experiences of women in real life. Whilst we are now beyond such black and white evaluations as provided by Gwyneth E. Edwards during the lifetime of the GDR, a comprehensive analysis does not yet exist.[41] Eva Kolinsky's wide ranging work on gender roles in the GDR, for example, although rich in revealing statistics regarding both the institutional framework and the real situation of women, displays a specifically Western approach. Her conclusion that women were 'In the GDR also in second place …' is linked to presumptuous statements implying that East German women were not aware of the injustice they experienced.[42] Furthermore, she concludes that only after unification did a dynamic interchange of private and public spheres develop 'on which a democratic political culture is built'.[43] She ignores the fact that many East German women within this democratic political culture lost their relative independence from traditional stereotypes within the private sphere at the same time as they lost their jobs and access to free contraception.

The mental changes caused by the existence of a political and social framework that demanded gender equality are crucial to an appreciation of gender roles in the GDR. However, they are notoriously difficult to trace, a situation worsened by some researchers who ignore East German social concepts. One study from 1992, which looks at psychological characteristics of East German women, uses Western definitions of modernity. It notes the modern practicality of GDR women but also their lack of reflexivity, a feature deemed crucial to modernity.[44]

Individualism, however, did not constitute a characteristic of the officially desired socialist personality. In this study, women are judged by concepts that were alien to East German society. Relevant issues such as changes in women's attitudes to stereotypes of female subordination are not analysed.

Prue Chamberlayne shows a greater awareness of such issues in her study of transitions in the private sphere in East Germany. She notes that, compared to Western women, women in the GDR were much less subject to private patriarchy in terms of legal and financial subordination. By the 1980s, three generations of children had been brought up in a social environment that expected girls to be treated on an equal basis with boys. This contentious achievement was eventually followed by the conceptual discussion regarding whether or not women should want to be treated like men. Chamberlayne suggests that the retreat of women into the family, which often prevented them from reaching better-paid jobs and political appointments, constituted an attempt to valorise femininity.[45] This resistance to the threat of sameness emphasises a superior awareness of problems surrounding gender issues amongst women. Irmtraud Morgner's *Amanda* and other literary texts support this interpretation.

With regard to German research on women in the GDR, three names need to be mentioned. Gunnar Winkler, the former director of the 'Institut für Soziologie and Sozialpolitik' of the AdW of the GDR, published the *Frauenreport'90* shortly after unification.[46] This important collection of statistical material provides historians with a crucial insight into the real position of women in the GDR. It supplies an important base for this specific field of research. Furthermore, both Irene Dölling and Hildegard-Maria Nickel have made outstanding contributions to research. Already in the 1980s, they tried to focus research on women in the GDR by creating a discussion group at the Humboldt University in Berlin. They worked on issues such as the double burden for women, gender specific segregation of the economic structure, the resistance of gender stereotypes, and patriarchy within the socialist system. Their work, both before and after 1990, still dominates this area of research.[47]

Research on women in the GDR has been slightly neglected and often focuses on statistics and the Western concept of feminism.[48] The mental changes affecting women over forty years of theoretical equality need to be researched in more detail, possibly using research that was done within the GDR.[49] There are hardly any studies on the DFD, the official mass organisation for women.[50] Furthermore, the issue of Christian women has been neglected almost entirely. The situation of women represents a major path into understanding the internal dynamics of

East German society. They made up almost half the workforce, brought up future generations, and were heavily involved in the upheavals of 1988 and 1989.[51] Their impact on society, and that of society on women, must be looked at more closely.

Youth

Young people in the GDR have received much and varied attention from historians. One approach has been to look at youth as an age category, another to view this group in cultural and historical terms divided into generations. Following 1989, two main lines of argument developed in respect to the position of youth in the GDR. Some highlighted the apparent successes of the coercive forces of the state; others concentrated on the supposed constant opposition among young people.[52] The breakdown of the GDR became the one aspect that was used to define the country's entire forty years of history.

However, since then important work has been done in collecting statistical data regarding such varied areas as membership in the official youth organisation, the FDJ, divorce rates, and migration levels amongst 18- to 25-year olds.[53] During the latter part of the 1990s in particular, monographs on the inner dynamics of specific subgroups, for example, students or the Prenzlauer Berg scene, appeared.[54] All of this helped the development of a more differentiated picture of young people's position in the GDR.

Dorothee Wierling and Pollack focus on the generations and their differentiated behaviour patterns and attitudes in relation to the state. Wierling in particular analyses what she calls the 'Hitlergeneration', people born in the 1920s that lived through the Third Reich but were still young enough after the war to adjust to and even embrace the new political system constructed in the GDR. According to Wierling, this generation was especially inclined to support the socialist system because of its previous experiences.[55] This approach has been supported by comments from intellectuals such as Christa Wolf and Heiner Müller, who as part of this specific generation, for a long time felt unable to oppose the political elite because of the anti-fascist myth attached to the system and some of its prominent individuals. However, at the same time, this approach limits and is incapable of grasping the complexity of East German society. Pollock uses the generational approach to highlight the specific role that young people took on with regard to the collapse of the state in 1989.[56] The young generation's distance from state ideology in particular helped to facilitate the upheavals of 1989.

Already in 1979, the young poet Uwe Kolbe remarked on the loneliness and sense of isolation felt by young writers, which prevented them from becoming involved: 'My generation sits back and does nothing, shows no commitment. [...] I can go even further and say that this generation is entirely confused, neither does it feel at home here nor does it see alternatives somewhere else.'[57] The concept of a niche society indicated in the quotation and introduced by Günter Gaus relatively early overemphasises a tendency visible among parts of society but is ineffective in describing the complex nature of GDR society.[58] This approach neglects the many compromises that were crucial to the stability of the GDR in the 1970s and 1980s and highlights only one side of young people's lives and attitudes.

Mary Fulbrook, who has also looked at generational differences, discerns three distinct generational groups that had specific positions within the GDR.[59] The division into KZ (concentration camp) generation, HJ (Hitler youth) generation, and FDJ generation named according to the prime socialising forces these groups were exposed to, seems helpful insofar as it highlights mental differences between the generations. The FDJ generation, for example, was socialised entirely within the GDR discourse. Nevertheless, it spearheaded the 1989 revolution. Fulbrook's approach opens up issues regarding not only the success or failure of GDR educational policies but also mental attitudes based on long-term developments. The archive of the former ZIJ, unfortunately long neglected by social historians, provides a wealth of information on the attitudes and values of young East Germans over two decades. This information will be used in the book to give some indication of relevant mental processes that reflected wider social and political developments.

The generational approach to GDR history of the 1970s and 1980s rightly highlights the importance of considering generational conflict as part of the inner dynamics of the GDR. In connection with the age-orientated approach, important conclusions can be drawn regarding the effects of having grown up in a country which gave so much consideration to the upbringing of young people. However, the book will give more attention to the combination of privilege and constant control which characterises the situation of young people in the GDR, and which was not shared by any other social group to the same extent.

Christians

One key question asked by historians has been whether the Churches, and in particular the Protestant Churches, undermined or sustained the

socialist dictatorship. With regard to the events of autumn 1989 at least, the Protestant Churches seemed to have weakened the state through their consistent position outside the political framework. Crucial in this respect was the safe haven they provided for dissident groups. This understanding, however, was quickly challenged after the strong MfS infiltration, highlighted by the case of Manfred Stolpe, became known.[60] It emerged that the Protestant Churches acted as an important player on the international stage. They had been instrumental in achieving international recognition for the GDR and organising profitable economic and political relations with the FRG. Both were crucial to the continued existence of the socialist state. Equally important was their role as a safety valve for the state by accommodating alternative cultures and dissident groups.[61] Recent research highlights the fact that the Churches in the GDR both sustained and undermined the state. Fulbrook suggests that the two positions, developing close partnership with the state on the one hand and testing the limits of toleration on the other, were processes symbiotic to each other.[62]

Three main lines of enquiry categorise the many recent studies done on Christianity in the GDR. The institutional development of the Churches in relation to their difficult position within an atheist state has been looked at in detail.[63] In particular, the relations between the representatives of the Church hierarchy and the 'Staatssekretär für Kirchenfragen' have been of interest in this context. Furthermore, the dealings with the MfS and the political involvement of the Churches, which increased after the crucial meeting with Honecker on 6 March 1978, have been the focus of historical research.[64] This approach to the complex Christian community, however, tends to represent one specific aspect of Christian life in the GDR whilst ignoring others that were equally important.

Secondly, historians have looked at the difficulties Christians encountered in their day-to-day social, professional, and political lives.[65] Negative experiences dominate this area of research in spite of the privileges enjoyed by some parts of the Christian community, including access to information, travel outside the Eastern Bloc, and the protective force of the international Christian community. Similarly, those Christians who supported the socialist regime have not been researched sufficiently.[66] These examples accentuate the fact that Church–state relations have been described primarily in terms of political confrontation and very little has been done to do justice to the complex nature of the Christian community.

Finally, studies on the issue of internal changes within the Churches, specifically adjustments to declining membership numbers, have been

published.[67] More attention should, however, be given to the changes in policy that were based on internal changes, especially the decision to support the concept of a Church within socialism and the special efforts in relation to work with young people in the 1970s. Those decisions were crucial to the political developments within the GDR in the 1980s and require detailed research.[68] Monographs on the structure and changes of attitudes among clergy, on religiosity and Church policy increasingly clarify the position of religion in the GDR.[69]

Research on the role of the East German CDU has so far focused on the party's subordinate relations to the SED since the 1950s, a fact for which the party experienced much condemnation.[70] Studies on the CDU that have been published recently mostly focus on the early years.[71] However, articles by Günther Wirth, formerly a member of the CDU leadership and president of the 'Kulturbund', give an insight into the cultural activities of the CDU.[72] Regional activities of Churches that addressed specific social groups, for example, women or young people, and those encouraging cultural activities need to be scrutinised more closely.

The social structure of religious life within the context of a politically powerful institution requires more research. In this book, the position of Christian women as part of a traditionally patriarchal institution and their reaction to the emancipating policies of the GDR government will be looked at in more detail. The complex relationship between Churches and the state too often neglects the situation and attitude of the Christian community. Again, compromises that were achieved are hidden from view by an overriding interest in the dictatorial tendencies of the state.

The historiographical situation still appears to be marked by political issues. The totalitarian approach in particular highlights this problem, although recent research has attempted to improve this situation. The new focus on social aspects and sociological research as a way of getting a clearer indication of the state's inner dynamics has helped to clarify issues, although a comprehensive overview has not yet been achieved.

Sources and methods

For this book a selection had to be made of the many sources and archives available. One major source of material, the 'Stiftung Archiv der Parteien und Massenorganisationen der ehemaligen DDR im Bundesarchiv'[73] and its library[74] in Berlin, provided crucial insights into the structure and activities of the party regime. It gave valuable

information with regard to the Free German Youth (FDJ), the East German Christian Democratic Union (CDU), the Free German Trade Union (FDGB), and other organisations relating to the four social groups of this study. The files relating to the relationship between the state and the Churches, and in particular concerning the 'Staatssekretär für Kirchenfragen' and the 'Abteilung Kirchenfragen' were of immense value to this study. With regard to the position of women in the GDR, material on the Democratic Women's Union of Germany (DFD) and the 'Abteilung Frauen' within the Central Committee of the SED (ZK SED) proved very informative. In addition, files from the offices of specific relevant individuals, particularly Kurt Hager, Inge Lange, Paul Verner, and Erich Honecker, and from the departments for culture ('Abteilung Kultur'), for youth ('Abteilung Jugend'), for mass education ('Abteilung Volksbildung'), and from the Ministry for Mass Education (MfV) were used. Although an almost inexhaustible source, it holds archival material pertaining primarily to the structures and activities of the regime itself. However, much of the documentation from party and government institutions regularly included reports on public opinion, communication with individuals, petitions, and sociological research that had been conducted on relevant social groups. During the research for this study, particular attention was paid to such information in order to avoid to great an emphasis on the regime's position. The archive of the MfS[75] supplied a great amount of material regarding the activities of both the regime and the four social groups, although most files will have an interpretative tinge that corrupts the reliability of interpretations provided by MfS officers. In these files, a side of socialist society not generally present in other government sources confronts the historian and provides insights into the cultural, social, and political subtexts of GDR society. In addition, the 'Landesarchiv Berlin'[76] was consulted to add a more localised perspective. In Bonn, the 'Konrad-Adenauer Stiftung' holds the archive of the former East German CDU[77], of which materials relating primarily to the CDU's department for Church issues ('Abteilung Kirchenfragen') and to Günter Wirth, a leading CDU functionary, were used.

To counterbalance data from government and SED sources, other archives were consulted. The central archive of the Protestant Churches[78], the archive of the Academy of Science (AdW) in Berlin[79], and the archive of the Academy of Pedagogic Sciences (APW) in Berlin[80] were of value in a realistic assessment of the roles and positions of women, the Christian community, and youth in the GDR. The AdW and APW's collections of sociological studies proved particularly rewarding.

The archive Grauzone[81] in Berlin offered material in relation to the alternative and oppositional scene, specialising on women's activities. Furthermore, the *Grüne Reihe*, a serial published from the late 1960s onwards by the research committee 'Die Frau in der sozialistischen Gesellschaft', gave specific insights into the academic work of East German scientists studying the emancipation of women and its impact on society. Most importantly, its extensive list of sociological studies on gender issues tracked the response of different generations of women to the emancipation processes in the GDR. In addition, the libraries of both, the 'Zentrum für Interdisziplinäre Frauenforschung' (Humboldt University) and the 'Stiftung zur Aufarbeitung der SED Diktatur' offer a good collection of relevant secondary material. The archive of the Academy of Arts (AdK)[82], incorporating most of the archive of the former writers' union of the GDR (SV), proved crucial regarding the activities and attitudes of the literary community.

Representative samples were chosen from the archival material of the former 'Zentralinstitut für Jugendforschung' (ZIJ) in Leipzig, which has now been integrated into the 'Deutsche Jugendinstitut' (DIJ).[83] Over two decades, the ZIJ was able to conduct research beyond the limits imposed by the regime and is, therefore, a valuable source in relation to the attitudes of young people during the 1970s and 1980s. The book draws on both the statistical and the interpretative analyses of 12 major surveys conducted between 1969 and 1990. In line with the brief of the institute, surveys concentrated primarily on the age group 14 to 26, including young apprentices, students, and those attending the last years of the 'Polytechnische Oberschule' (POS), the mainstream school for 6- to 16-year-olds. However, younger children were also included. Sociological studies conducted at the institute offered wide-ranging and important insights into the opinions and behaviour patterns of young people. Although the institute was able to circumvent the regime's demands in many cases, the data it used has to be examined carefully in view of the circumstances of its collection.

Regarding the grassroots level, individuals were interviewed or provided material from their personal archives. In particular, Pfarrer Hilmar Günther from Dresden who supervised the Protestant student congregation in Dresden (ESG Dresden) in the late 1970s made available a collection of documents pertaining to its activities during that time, including much on the issue of pacifism in the socialist state.[84] Conversations with Hermann Kant, Vera Lengsfeld[85], Horst Dohle, and representatives of the Protestant Churches, the CDU, and the alternative scene helped to clarify issues. Collections of press releases were analysed to highlight

positions of distinguished writers, in particular Christa Wolf and Hermann Kant. Finally, the central archive for empirical social science in Cologne yielded crucial analyses in relation to migration.

The aim in selecting these sources has been to penetrate the complexity of the suggested group constellation. To analyse every aspect of this comparison is beyond this project's parameters. For example, the book will not contain any lengthy discussion of the class issue as Jeffrey Kopstein covers this area admirably.[86] The analysis of the wide-ranging archival material concentrates on issues that highlight the potential of East German society.

Rather than relying entirely on the political framework installed by the state this book looks at two aspects that define life in the GDR as experienced by the majority of the population. First, the methods are examined, which the state used to translate an increasingly rigid political construction into policies that influenced every part of society and every detail of life in the GDR. To complement this, the experience of the four social groups is analysed, including their attempts to deal with state policy. In spite of the efforts of the MfS, parts of the population continuously circumvented the ideological demands of the state and were able to establish complex structures of interaction. This subversive behaviour developed partly in response to increased politicisation under Honecker at the beginning of the 1970s. Its presence acknowledged the general expectation that the GDR would continue to exist for a long time, perhaps forever. The population was getting increasingly used to this prospect and searched for ways to live with the dictatorship. Waiting for one's 'Trabant' and enjoying weekends in small gardens with the obligatory dacha were one possibility. Watching Western TV channels, telling jibes about Honecker, and ignoring ideological propaganda were other ways in which East Germans responded to the political claims of the state.

Those individual responses were paralleled by much more significant tendencies. Local governments began to interpret state policy according to individual attitudes. Women turned back to part-time employment in the 1980s in spite of state policy that demanded full-time employment. Young people in particular became adept at exploiting the system in order to get access to higher education, avoid confrontation with superiors, or take advantage of the many benefits offered to them by the state. The Churches proved increasingly able to use their international connections to protect and support their members. From the late 1970s onwards, they were in a position to offer space to groups that were politically or socially isolated within the GDR. Writers were in a specifically

privileged position that allowed them to play the system to a greater extent than any of the other groups could have dared. These few examples, which will be examined more fully in the following chapters, show aspects of the complex nature of GDR society that were crucial to the stability of the political system.

Within the SED itself political opinion was not unanimous.[87] Former members of the KGB have indicated that from the late 1970s onwards, various high-ranking members of the SED tried to undermine Honecker's standing in Moscow.[88] Furthermore, Hans Modrow warned against the tendency to imagine the members of the ZK SED as a monolithic entity. Criticism increased in particular in the 1980s, when information regarding the real situation in the country began to be exchanged. Modrow also pointed out the individual efforts of many party and government functionaries who tried to solve problems by taking the initiative.[89] During that period, groups of leading SED members tried to create informal connections and searched for gaps in the decisions of the Politburo to expand their scope for action.[90] During the 1980s, SED reformers turned towards 'Modern Socialism', recommending the implementation of structures similar to a market economy but improved by social welfare policies. At the end of 1989, a group of former SED members called 'Moderner Sozialismus' published working papers along those lines.[91] However, criticism within the SED was hardly ever linked to oppositional activities and even critical intellectuals such as Rudolf Bahro hoped to improve rather than destroy socialist society.

The GDR was a dictatorship which attempted to suppress the political will of the population and even create a specific personality type.[92] The SED's ideological claims continuously infringed on the private sphere, and the state effectively imprisoned the vast majority of GDR citizens by imposing travel restrictions. Nevertheless, within the political framework of this dictatorship a distinct cultural and social climate developed, which caused many to identify themselves with the GDR.[93]

Periodisation

The period 1971 to 1989 has been underresearched so far, although it was distinguished by a new stability, which Honecker upheld up to the late 1980s:

> An Attitude, which one could detect in many people ten years after the wall was built: a resignation, which tended to give affirmation to the existing, which made possible a comfortable getting used

to a predicament and which disallowed thoughts about change. […] The ruled had learned to be content with modest circumstances, and even the rulers began to resign themselves to the people. […] Security became the most useful propaganda term. There existed something like a 'keep-quiet-agreement' between the top and the grassroots.[94]

Günter de Bruyn's description of the mood in the 1970s and 1980s emphasises the unique features of that period. A large proportion of the population had no direct experience of another political system. In the 1960s, this situation was quite different, especially as people were still coming to terms with the building of the Wall in 1961. This change in attitude from the 1960s to the 1970s was vital to the changing social and psychological circumstances under Honecker. The concept of dictatorship was not a hotly discussed issue in the 1970s and the early part of the 1980s. Rather, political restrictions were a factor that was dealt with in a very practical sense. The strong interconnection between social and political history in the GDR constitutes a major aspect of the book.

Contemporary popular opinion within the GDR described 1971, the year of Honecker's succession to Ulbricht as a second awakening ('Jahr des zweiten Aufbruchs'), reflecting the optimism felt at the time.[95] Nevertheless, the 1970s and 1980s constituted a homogeneous period within GDR history, which despite having much in common with the Ulbricht era clearly showed new tendencies in political, social, economic, and cultural spheres. The introduction of the 'Einheit von Wirtschafts-und Sozialpolitik' during the early 1970s; the 'no taboos' policy towards culture announced by Honecker in December 1971; the new laws on abortion; the rapprochement between Church and state especially during the talks on 6 March 1978 – these all indicate a turning point in the political, social, and economic development of the GDR. Furthermore, during the 1970s the activities and institutional structure of the MfS began to grow rapidly and became more focused on internal security. The 1970s constituted a qualitative break in state policy. They set the stage for the last decade of the GDR's existence, which was marked by both tensions and working compromises.

In addition, the oil crises of 1973 and 1978 caused economic difficulties, in particular a debt burden which, regardless of any political difficulties, left the GDR in a precarious position. One can only speculate as to the extent to which productivity, a constant factor of concern for the GDR was lowered or kept low during the 1980s by the political disillusionment that followed the productivity drive of the 1970s.

The economic problems in 1989 effectively prevented the creation of a reformed but sovereign state and forced the reunification with the Federal Republic of Germany (FRG). Although economic problems must be considered in relation to the GDR's rapid collapse in 1989, in order to understand how viable the GDR had been under Honecker, researchers need to concentrate on the population's social and political experiences of the 1970s and most of the 1980s.

Part of this experience, however, was both the mass exodus of East Germans leaving for the West and the gentle revolution in 1989. How can one call a society viable, when so many of its citizens expressed their discontent in such obvious terms? First of all, the crisis of the last few years before the collapse of the GDR did not entirely reflect the previous political and social situation but only specific aspects of it. Even during the crucial summer of 1989, the majority of East Germans stayed in the GDR or returned to it after they had been in Hungary where the borders were open. Second, the demonstrators who began the revolution, like most of the citizens' groups that developed under the protection of the Protestant Churches, wished primarily for change within the socialist context. Only later, in the face of economic problems, did the slogan 'We are the people!' change to one putting forward the national concept which led to unification in 1990. The difficulties experienced by East Germans in the new Germany highlight the impropriety of reducing GDR history to the events of 1988 and 1989.

By choosing four specific social groups to analyse, other equally important sections of society are excluded. However, the intention of this work is to give an insight into the internal workings and diversity of a socialist society. For that a selection should suffice. Furthermore, by comparing and interlinking the various social groups both a broad spectrum and various levels of communication, compromise, and tension become visible. This approach puts the emphasis very firmly on social realities.

This project is based on a clear awareness that the GDR was a dictatorship. This means a number of people were not allowed to express their opinions, suffered repression and even lost their lives. Dissidents emerged but the majority of GDR citizens lived their lives quietly within the GDR, most of them engaged in dialogue with the government's institutions. The numerous petitions that were sent to all institutions and parties played a crucial part within the dialogue, reassuring both sides of continued stability. Opposition happened on the fringes of society, and only in the last months of 1989 did it take centre stage.

Structure

The structure of the book is characterised by a move away, chapter by chapter, from the crude categories of the state. Chapters 2 and 3 will focus on the state's policies and institutional framework that catered for the four groups. This section will follow the state's categorisation of society into rough groups in order to take account of the limitations of this particular approach. Although separated in successive chapters, the analyses are built on and interlink with each other.

Chapters 2 and 3 will concentrate on the regime's policy and institutions. In Chapter 2, the analysis of the central policy in general and regarding the positions of the four groups will discuss issues such as the political role of the Churches and the writers' community as intended by the state. Furthermore, the attention paid by the state to young people and their upbringing will be investigated with reference to the concept of the socialist personality. Specific educational policies that were promoted particularly after Honecker became head of state seem indicative of a new mentality that governed the 1970s and 1980s. Policies regarding women's position in the GDR also changed the inner dynamics of East German society and provide crucial insights into an ambivalent political framework. Following this, the institutional development and environment of the four groups will be analysed in order to assess their limitations and possibilities with respect to the groups' political and social impact.

By contrast, Chapters 4 and 5 will concentrate on diversity and tensions. Elements of society that existed outside the structure provided by the state authorities and the differentiation seen in real life will be analysed. The realities as they presented themselves to the four groups in their relations to each other will be explored. The self-definitions of the four social groups, outside the official demands of the state, are revealing in their deviations from political guidelines. Tensions within the groups seem equally important for the general analysis of the difficulties or support they encountered. Furthermore, the existence of unease or positive relations in important areas of shared influence between these groups will help to clarify their attitudes and values. A certain tension, for example, with regard to the Churches can be expected within the other three groups simply because of the fact that by the late 1970s the Churches had become institutions catering for a minority including a large proportion of elderly people.

The following two chapters discuss the channels of communication and the compromises that stabilised the system by bridging the gap between the regime's political provisions and the complexity of society.

The need to co-exist will be at the centre of this discussion. For example, the petition system presented a line of communication between state and society which benefited both sides. The authorities receiving those petitions were mostly intent on solving the problems presented to them, often in the interest of the complaining party. At the same time, much information could be gleaned from petitions, which helped the centralised political system to monitor the implementation of its policies. To some extent, even the activities of the MfS can be interpreted as a line of communication. The ministry was the best-informed institution within the GDR, had direct links to the highest political authorities and reacted directly to the information it was able to collect. Communication was possible in the GDR and stabilised the state as a whole. The decline of the GDR from 1987 onwards will be part of the concluding chapter. It will highlight the link between the ability to sustain compromises successfully on a basis of mutual consent and maintaining a stable social and political system. As a whole, the last three chapters analyse the practice within the theoretical framework.

Furthermore, GDR society will be discussed in terms of its stability. Many compromises were developed under Honecker. Various methods, in particular privileges and cooperation, were successfully employed right up to the late 1980s to stabilise and strengthen relations between the state and society. The various compromises were specific to different groups within society and not always long-lived. The collapse of the GDR in 1989 was closely linked to the compromises, which Gorbachev's reforms not only called into question but also entirely undermined. From 1987 onwards, the political elite felt unable to continue a policy of compromises. It was severely threatened by the changes that were occurring within the state that had guaranteed the GDR's existence for four decades. In addition, the reactions of the political elite and the lack of response during the summer months of 1989 dramatically lowered the level of acceptance among the population in the GDR. By autumn 1989, mutual concessions were no longer possible or desired. Communication and compromise were important features of socialist society in the GDR but are often underrepresented in historical research on the subject. However, they were crucial to both the existence and the collapse of the GDR.

Summary

This book shows both the participation and the differentiation that marked the former East German society. Crucially, it highlights the

stability of the GDR until 1987. The analysis of the position of four specific social groups within the GDR, of the tensions surrounding them and contained within them, their relationships to each other and to the state, highlights the need to co-exist, and therefore to communicate, in the dictatorial state. From 1987 onwards, this mutual agreement on a policy of compromise was dramatically undermined by Gorbachev's reforms in the Soviet Union and by the withdrawal of the Brezhnev Doctrine. Rising expectations among the population, increased fear and inflexibility among the political elite, and economic difficulties led to the rapid collapse of the GDR in 1989. In explaining life in the GDR, it cannot be sufficient to follow only the state's limited view of society. Although the political leadership of the GDR created a dictatorship that confined the vast majority of the population and threatened the lives of individuals, the reality as experienced by most of the East German people was made up of compromises that stabilised the relations between state and society.

2
Central Policy

The SED policy towards the four social groups followed rough categories, which will be reflected in the following chapter to reconstruct the inherent problems of the regime's political strategy. The desire to legislate for and control every detail of life proved not only unattainable but exhausted the entire political, economic, and social system. Furthermore, failure allowed sections of society to develop strong positions within, and functions beyond, the increasingly rigid political structures. In this chapter, the extent of central policy will be discussed and also its limitations; the latter determined the communist party's need for cooperation from the four social groups. Finally, the chapter focuses on general shortcomings of the regime's policy that affected all four social groups, and on their consequences for the stability of the regime.

Honecker after Ulbricht

Whilst he was in power, Ulbricht had actively driven forward the isolation of specific social groups. During the early 1950s Churches and Christians were repeatedly attacked, culminating in the introduction of the 'Jugendweihe' in May 1955, which undermined much of the Churches' work with young people and threatened the future of Christianity in the GDR.[1] In September 1950, Ulbricht even prohibited Jehovah's Witnesses, who had already endured persecution in the Third Reich, from practising their beliefs.[2] Only after Ulbricht's programmatic declaration of 4 October 1960 did the open attacks on the Christian community end, although for some time he refused to acknowledge the newly founded 'Bund Evangelischer Kirchen in der DDR' (BEK). The rejection reflected the real position of Christians of all denominations in the GDR during the 1960s.[3]

There are many anecdotes about Ulbricht's hatred of symbols of Western culture such as jeans, rock and roll, and beat. This rejection of popular culture had a more serious side to it. Young people who attracted attention through their musical and fashion preferences were actively persecuted under Ulbricht. In the 1960s, with the aim of ostracising young beat followers, statistics were falsified and statements were placed in the media blaming specific groups of young people for an imaginary rise in youth crime.[4] In a similar vein, writers who worked outside the prescribed socialist realism suffered verbal attacks from Ulbricht such as his January 1963 diatribe against the representatives of the 'style entitled modernism'.[5] Even more dangerous was the 11th plenary meeting of the ZK SED in December 1965, at which many writers were openly and savagely attacked, most notably Stefan Heym but also Wolf Biermann.[6] During the 1950s and 1960s, not much effort was made to integrate groups or subgroups. In fact, there were specific campaigns to isolate those who digressed even slightly from the given political line. Honecker took a different approach.

After the upheaval of the late 1960s, the SED urgently required the cooperation of the various social groups to stabilise the country. Furthermore, the party needed to distance itself from the unpopular Ulbricht. To win public support for the new leadership, Honecker was prepared to make concessions such as the 'no taboo' policy in the cultural sphere, improvements in standards of living, social benefits focusing on the needs of women, and later even a rapprochement with the Churches. To improve the international standing of the GDR, he opted for subtle methods of control hoping thereby to avoid any comparison with the Third Reich. Honecker's new approach differentiated between the various groups by offering improvements and privileges tailored to their specific interests. This process helped to entrench the divisions between individual groups as each became concerned with protecting their particular, albeit limited, privileges.

Throughout the 1970s and 1980s, any loss of cooperation from the four groups carried major risks for the political and social stability of the GDR. The apparent stability of the GDR which Honecker used to gain international recognition in the 1970s and continued financial credits in the 1980s depended on their support. In particular, writers with an international reputation and the Christian community with its widespread international connections were essential for Honecker's credibility. Similarly, women, especially mothers, and young people were useful in representing the success of socialism. The 'happy family' was part of an image which depicted both social security and progress.

At the same time women and youth constituted crucial sections of the workforce in the GDR, thereby embodying not only the ideological but also the economic future of the socialist state. These four social groups were flash points for the regime. It feared their association with each other.[7] In addition, the uprising of 1953, the Prague Spring in 1968, and the activities of Solidarnosc in Poland continued to influence the decisions of the political elite, which dreaded provoking the population by any withdrawal of privileges and continued to offer social, economic, and political bribes.[8] The decision to implement a policy of compromise was upheld until the late 1980s in spite of adjustments and restrictions that were applied when a situation threatened to get out of hand. Some compromises were sustained only for a limited period. In most cases, they were based on a mutual interest in stability.

In this sense, Honecker's political approach presented a stark contrast to Ulbricht's methods. He dismissed many of the technocrats and initiated the return to a more centralised economy abandoning Ulbricht's experiments with a market-orientated structure. Relations with Moscow were revived and Erich Mielke, the Minister for Security, was elected to the Politburo for his services in deposing Ulbricht. Honecker's accession in 1971 was accompanied by distinct changes within both the government and the communist party.

The personality cult, which Ulbricht had encouraged, was quickly replaced by a friendlier atmosphere, which allowed fellow party members to call the head of state 'dear' Erich. Crucially for the legitimisation of the GDR as a democratic country worthy of international recognition, Honecker kept the two positions of head of government and party leader separate in the first few years.[9] This changed in 1976 when the domestic situation became more difficult. He reduced the influence of the 'Staatsrat' that had been dominant under Ulbricht and greatly diminished the role of the ZK SED. Honecker intended to show a 'almost perfect political-ideological unity' between the party leadership and the elected body. Eventually he restricted conferences of the ZK SED to two every year. At these meetings, the ZK SED was expected to accept the decisions made previously by the Politburo and to applaud falsified economic results.[10] Over the years, Honecker worked carefully to strengthen his own position to such an extent that hardly anybody tried to question or oppose his views. According to Hans Modrow, first secretary of the SED in Dresden and short-term head of government from winter 1989 onwards, Honecker soon dominated the political apparatus: 'Orders from the General secretary were as binding as those from the Politburo, in practice they often counted for more.'[11] Although this

evaluation has been supported by other sources, in particular other officials who worked with Honecker, former functionaries might be expected to downplay their own role within the dictatorial system and this limits their reliability.[12] Nevertheless, archival material pertaining to both governmental and party institutions supports this view of Honecker's extensive powers.[13] The drawbacks of this elevated political position were immense and the inherent dangers, including the ridicule, were reflected in an incident remembered by Hermann Kant:

> When [Honecker] received the World Church Council and repeatedly talked about 'economical' when 'ecumenical' would have been the accurate term … Only, I still keep asking myself, if our court really was as lackeyed that one was too afraid to interfere in the leading man's vocabulary, if not in his business, and point out the difference between economy and ecumenical Christianity.[14]

Kant's anecdote paints a vivid picture of the personality cult, which was all too common in socialist societies. The reluctance to criticise or even inform the head of state and party leader, was encouraged by the rigid political hierarchy, and helped sustain the autocracy in the short term but also undermined it.[15] A huge political administration stood behind Honecker. It enabled him to occupy a supreme political position. However, this vast structure made it virtually impossible to guide and control effectively the application of central state policies at the local level and left space for digressions and interventions. Political, social, and economic compromises were necessary to sustain this centralised system, which in reality harboured great variations in all areas of life.

As with Ulbricht, Honecker's basic objective was to control the various groups within the GDR. However, Honecker attempted to consolidate society and integrate the social groups that had been alienated during the 1950s and 1960s. This constituted an entirely different strategy. For this approach to be successful, he had to do both: communicate and compromise.

Integration and social policy

To calm tensions and show initiative, Honecker offered something to every group in the first half of the 1970s. There was increased spending on social benefits and a better standard of living. The main task ahead, it was announced, was to be the merging of economic and social programmes. This policy was intended to raise living standards further whilst increasing productivity. Honecker improved the availability of

foodstuffs, the quality and quantity of living space, and health care provision. Apart from a drive to appease the population, which had become extremely dissatisfied during the late 1960s, Honecker began to develop a more accessible image than Ulbricht had cultivated. In a report on the mood of the population after the VIII Party Conference, the opinions of students from the Humboldt University were cited:

> The studentship's general openness towards the party's policies is ongoing. Many students have stated that much has become clearer to them. Now, the goals of socialist politics – aimed at the improvement of people's living conditions – are better supported by the policies of party and government.[16]

These sentiments from a section of society which tended to be critical, reflected many other positive reactions to Honecker's social policy. After 1971, Honecker used the new policy 'Einheit von Wirtschafts- und Sozialpolitik' to stabilise society and achieve loyalty by providing a socially secure environment. In so doing, he reacted directly to the economic crisis in the late 1960s and 1970, which had resulted in public demands for an improvement in living standards.[17] The most important criterion for the selection of a specific social policy was the political potential of any such measure, although the acceptance of credits from West Germany undermined the ideological consistency of the socialist state and its economic viability.[18]

In a similar attempt to mollify specific sections of society, Honecker began to improve the relations with the Churches. Although the BEK was officially recognised three months before Ulbricht's resignation, it was Honecker who granted the concessions which were crucial to its establishment as an effective institution. In June 1971, the state licensed the official information bulletin *Mitteilungsblatt des BEK*. It also approved allocations of hard currency to the BEK covering its contributions to international organisations such as the World Council of Churches (WCC).[19] These concessions started a process that led to the crucial meeting between the BEK and Honecker on 6 March 1978. Its novelty was the most important aspect of the crucial meeting between Honecker and high-ranking delegates of the BEK. For Honecker, this process proved dangerous. The decision to work with the Churches, within limits, compromised ideological guidelines. Cooperation decriminalised the political enemy. It also created a space that could not be controlled to the same extent as other parts of society.

Regarding foreign policy, the GDR also followed a new political line aiming at international recognition and security, which led to the

enactment of the Basic Treaty in June 1973.[20] In the first half of the 1970s, Honecker gave the impression of a man who had left behind the old and harsh tactics of the Politburo. Ulbricht's alienating approach was replaced by efforts to integrate and cooperate. The compromises made in those early years were marked by an attempt to distinguish between different interest groups within society. However, Honecker's methods were not limited to grants of social and political privileges, he also implemented various policies that increased politicisation, especially among the young generation. Aggressive repression of dissidents remained an undeniable part of the regime. In the following sections Honecker's policy towards the four social groups will be analysed with a view to both their theoretical and realistic positions within the regime.

'Wer die Jugend hat, der besitzt die Zukunft'

The SED repeatedly declared its preoccupation with youth policy. As the SED slogan 'He, who has the young generation, owns the future' suggested, this was not an entirely selfless concern for the upbringing of young people. The state needed the young to support the political project of communism. Without their ideological commitment to the future of the GDR as a socialist society, this project was doomed. Indoctrination was a crucial part of Honecker's approach, as the analysis of basic tenets of youth policy will show. Youth played an essential role in the communist scheme.

At the VIII Party Congress of the SED, the new Secretary General of the party discussed the concept of the 'socialist personality', a central theme of youth policy since 1949. In his words, the primary objective of youth policy was: '… to bring up all young people according to the worldview and morality of the working class in order to make them into comprehensively developed socialist personalities.'[21] This political concept had direct implications for the position of youth within the GDR. Its idealised image of the socialist personality combined various characteristics, most of which are mentioned in the following excerpt taken from a description by the Central Council for 'Jugendweihe' a state ceremony to welcome young people into the communist adult community:

> Knowledge and ability, a sense of responsibility and a sense of duty towards society, a strong class-induced point of view [Klassenstandpunkt] and the willingness to live up to the high demands put on every worker in our country with regard to learning and work – those are decisive characteristics of socialist personalities.[22]

Young people were expected to toe the party line, take up the communist cause, and ensure the continuity of the socialist experiment in the GDR. Furthermore, they were to work hard and expect little other than ideological satisfaction in return. A certain degree of hatred for the capitalist enemy and love for the Soviet Brother State was also demanded. Although this idealised image might seem to combine an unreasonable mixture of attributes, it fitted perfectly into Marxism–Leninism, which was decisive for the political elite.

The ideological drive of the East German political elite has been underestimated in recent historical research. Here political decisions have been presented simply as measures based on short-term requirements rather than a long-term concern with the communist cause.[23] Communist convictions were strongly held up to and beyond the fateful year of 1989. They influenced all political decisions and youth policy in particular reflected this.[24] In fact, the primary educational function of the SED was the spreading of Marxism–Leninism. To achieve this, its principles were taught in schools, at university, and in youth and party organisations. Both the Ministries of Education and the FDJ were directly responsible for the promotion of specifically socialist attitudes and behaviour in young people. However, equally important were measures devised to integrate young people into socialist society based on their individual interests and requirements. This unique combination of control and privilege defined the position of young people in the GDR in the 1970s and 1980s. It resulted in a comparatively strong position for this social group.

Control and privilege

Up to the late 1960s, the SED took an authoritarian approach to youth policy setting out tight rules and clamping down on those who transgressed. Under Honecker, better standards of living were offered and the cultural sphere was liberated. Better provisions were made for young families, and young women in particular were strongly supported as mothers, wives, and workers. Nevertheless, the university admission laws from 1 July 1971 favoured political commitment over intellectual ability and the new school curriculum that was introduced in 1974 contained a stronger emphasis on ideological education in all areas of the school system.[25] Schools implemented the decision of the Politburo to improve socialist education for children in the 'Pionierorganisation', a subsection of the FDJ.[26] This process is also reflected in the statutes of the FDJ from 1963 and 1976. Whilst the 1963 statute describes its main aim as organising young people for the active participation in

productive work within industry and agriculture, it uses a much more political statement in 1976: 'The FDJ recognises as its main duty the task to help the SED to bring up steadfast fighters, who will build communist society and act according to Marxism–Leninism.'[27] Ideological theory did not necessarily have any immediate impact on the experiences of young people but it showed the increased politicisation of the early 1970s. Although practical implications are secondary in this context, they are indicated by a campaign planned in September 1971 by the Central Council of the FDJ (ZR FDJ).[28] It proposed to include aggressive attacks on religious tendencies among young people to fight behaviour that undermined socialist values. One letter, sent by the ZR FDJ to Hans Seigewasser in December 1971 asked for cooperation in regarding the improvement of young people's ideological education. Furthermore, the FDJ hoped to combat the noticeable qualitative and quantitative increase in the Protestant Churches' activities in this sector.[29]

Politicisation also expressed itself in a new attempt by the SED, in conjunction with the FDJ, to occupy and organise much of young people's spare time. The new Youth Law from 1974 focused quite clearly on the political education of young people: 'When fashioning the developed socialist society, it is a main task to bring up all young people as citizens, who are loyal supporters of the socialist ideology.'[30] It also stipulated the responsibilities of the FDJ. These included a demand to increase the political influence of the FDJ on students, to influence their spare time, and to encourage students to take part in social, economic, and political projects in support of the regime.[31] One report from November 1976 highlights the difficulties encountered in Neubrandenburg following the attempt to organise young people's spare time according to an annual plan similar to those used within the centralised economy. Apprentices from that area complained of being pressured into attending the events arranged for them. In their opinion, FDJ activities constituted an extension of work time rather than recreation.[32] In Dresden, the measures taken to implement the Youth Law of 1974 included the provision of entertainment during school vacations. This plan, however, featured primarily 'Training courses, scouting games, […] target practice, [and] excursions to memorial sites of the revolutionary working class', which aimed to encourage motivation for the defence of the socialist state.[33] Regular ideological education for young people were concerned with introducing facts. Hardly ever did it accommodate political discussions, which, in any case, was not a priority for the local authorities: 'It is to ensure that all officials make appearances in front of young people on a regular basis, to explain the policies of party and government and

to make them familiar with the thirty-year long history of the GDR.'[34] In this statement, which was issued by the Dresden district council, the possibility of discussion is neither encouraged nor forbidden. The order is to inform young people of the state's intentions.

Propaganda dominated all areas of life. It became so pervasive that a great part of the population felt overburdened; especially the young, who endured the full force of it.[35] Most developed a reluctance to listen to or read political statements, a reaction encouraged by the dryness of the political language. Long-winded sentences containing complicated political terms increasingly prevented effective communication. Various surveys conducted by the ZIJ showed that in many cases political concepts were not fully understood.[36] In 1989, 1st district secretaries of the FDJ, who were attending a political education course, found it difficult to answer basic questions such as 'What do we communists want?' And 'What is socialism?'. Nobody was able to explain what the FDJ statute stated in relation to the concept of democratic centralism and they could only partly account for the basic aims of the communist cause as declared in the *Manifesto of the Communist Party*.[37] Clearly, the increased politicisation was of limited success.

Honecker also introduced more positive measures to integrate youth. Parts of the Youth Law were designed to strengthen young people's position by giving them the right to participate in meetings of governmental or economic bodies whenever issues concerning youth were being discussed.[38] Propaganda slogans extolling young people and their role in the political struggle also helped to encourage young people's sense of integration. In some cases, occurring in the early 1970s, this led to feelings of superiority and a tendency to take social provisions for granted: 'Some teachers and students have shown symptoms of arrogance and egotism as part of the general pride in the achievements of the GDR.'[39] Such notions underline the generally hopeful attitude widespread during the early 1970s, when changes to the social, cultural, and economic sectors were introduced. The success of Honecker's strategies should not be underestimated. Although the exuberant mood of the early 1970s was soon buried amidst the traumas of the later years, the existence of such optimism among many parts of society recalled the original anticipation of the 1950s and indicated the continuing acceptance of the political system. Much later, in 1993, a survey produced statistics that highlighted the extent of integration achieved under Honecker. Of the nearly 1000 people asked only 9.4% denied that the GDR had been an attempt to create a fairer society. In 1999, this percentage had sunk to only 7.1%. When asked if the history of the GDR

constituted that of a state not founded on the rule of law ('Unrechtsstaat'), 42.6% denied this claim. Over 78% agreed that the history of the GDR contained both positive and negative aspects similar to any other state ('wie die Geschichte aller Staaten').[40] These results, taken years after the collapse of the regime, highlight the existence of a basic link between the former GDR and most of its citizens, that not only survived the arrival of democracy but also seem to have been strengthened by the long-term experience of political freedom. Young people's lives in the GDR were marked by a combination of control and privilege that differentiated their position and treatment from other social groups. It was difficult for young people to avoid constant control up to leaving school at the age of sixteen, in most cases longer in further education or professional apprenticeships as teachers and the FDJ observed their behaviour and activities. Whilst other groups within society were also under surveillance, none was exposed to it in such a direct and constant manner as the young generation. This situation resulted primarily from the perceived vulnerability of young people and from the state's search for the elusive socialist personality. However, at the same time young people were treated to social benefits and were given unusual leeway with regard to their political attitude and conduct. In many cases, the state authorities, including the MfS, showed a strong desire to rehabilitate those who had been led astray by the capitalist tempter.[41] In 1987, a lecture intended for future officers of the MfS concluded:

> The enemy is attempting to ideologically establish itself among our young people, even among students. Our young generation is to be turned into a generation of discontent, politically disquiet and dissident 'socialism-dropouts'.[42]

This quotation is typical of the attitude of the MfS towards youth. In almost all instances of dissent, the MfS blamed the capitalist enemy. Although, in some cases, this approach made it easier for young people to avoid prosecution, it also denied them a voice of their own. Furthermore, young people in the GDR could hardly move without encountering a restriction, a political expectation or activities they had to participate in, if they wanted to avoid confrontation. Every word was interpreted politically and many activities that explored the process of growing up were taken by teachers, administrators, or the MfS to indicate opposition in one way or another. When in 1988 young officers of the MfS, participating in a singing contest, came up with a text that harmlessly caricatured the Chekist tradition and mentioned the recent

withdrawal of the Soviet magazine *Sputnik*, there was much hilarity and applause among the young audience but a much more critical response from the authorities. The SED control commission was called in to investigate the incident.[43]

The statistics compiled by the MfS regarding youth criminality also reflected the tendency to overreact and suspect the work of the enemy in every minute occurrence.[44] In particular, hooliganism, often caused by drunkenness, was invariably interpreted as a political act.[45] Socialist society, so the SED argued, would not generate violence and drunkenness among young people and therefore the political enemy, in particular the FRG, was held responsible for the increase in alcoholism among young people during the 1980s.[46] Throughout the 1970s and 1980s, youth was not thought of as an independently thinking social group but as an entity almost entirely shaped by outside influences. This was reflected in the overprotective and over-regulatory attributes of youth policy.

Honecker's integrative method of combining increased politicisation with social benefits and privileges was most apparent in relation to youth policy. However, as will be shown in Chapter 3, the political system allowed individual functionaries to apply their extraordinary influence to ensure that compromises were sought almost entirely within the social and cultural sectors. The unique position of the young generations marked them out as one group, although subgroups such as young Christians or young homosexuals were largely isolated from the mainstream.[47] Youth policy was neither comprehensive nor entirely ignorant of the complex nature of society and its demands. Some cross sections, such as young women and young writers, were given much attention and provided for extensively. Particularly policy relating to women was consistently hailed as the success story of socialism.

'Muttipolitik' – the regime's greatest success?

In Marxism, the concept of gender equality is based on a belief that social progress can be measured by the standing of women in society. Emancipation is thought achievable, mainly by directly involving women in productive work outside the family, as Friedrich Engels outlined in *Der Ursprung der Familie, des Privateigentums und des Staats* (1884).[48] The question of gender roles within the private sphere, however, is not discussed in this context. The basic legal arrangements in the GDR reflected this approach up to a point. The constitution of 1949 guaranteed equality and the revised constitution of 1968 pledged special

support for women in relation to their educational, professional, and political development. Furthermore, the Family Code from 1965 legislated for equal rights and responsibilities for wife and husband within the family, including childcare and housework. It reflected contemporary attitudes as Dorothee Wierling has shown. Her evidence indicates an orientation away from masculine values towards the end of the 1960s. By analysing the imagery of propaganda posters in that period, she highlights the depiction of the GDR as a young, blonde-haired, and beautiful woman and mother in 1969. Partly based on interviews conducted with a cohort of men and women born in 1949, she suggests that in those years emasculating tendencies marked social values. Ideals were based on traditionally feminine characteristics such as compassion, caring attitudes, and the longing for social security. The growing importance of the term 'Geborgenheit', describing a feeling of being kept secure and incorporating strong feminine connotation, accompanied this development.[49]

With the accession of Honecker, however, this approach was altered. The introduction of social benefits and financial incentives directly linked to woman and motherhood resulted in a new social tendency that redressed the developments of the 1960s and ensured the re-traditionalising of gender stereotypes.[50] By the 1980s, the use of imagery to depict success in the GDR showed entirely different characteristics in comparison to the images used in the late 1960s.[51] An analysis of photos used in the GDR's only women's magazine *Für Dich*, which had a circulation of over one million, showed very specific gender models marked by patriarchal stereotypes in the 1980s.[52] At the beginning of the 1980s, the 'Kulturbund' initiated a public discussion within the magazine examining the depiction of women in the GDR, which led to various conferences on the issue and stimulated research recognising the increased reproduction of patriarchal stereotypes, for example within schoolbooks.[53] This process was in line with political attitudes, which provided for women and mothers specifically but, in the end, hindered their equal standing in society by allocating to the female part of the population a protected, and thereby subordinate, space.

Furthermore, the various privileges of women and mothers in particular led to much resentment among men. In many cases, the social benefits targeted at women were specifically designed to help women in their role as mothers with the effect that traditional gender stereotypes were revived. In an economy with full employment, one year maternity leave for women made it more difficult to achieve equality in the workplace. Accordingly, it was men, primarily, who, leaving childcare to

their wives, filled high-powered management positions. Already in the 1970s, Anita Grandke, who was actively involved in GDR research projects into women's position in the socialist society, pointed out the inherent dangers of this strategy:

> However, one should not extend special rights to women, which are granted in relation to those policies that have been mentioned, with consideration for 'their' familial responsibilities if those rights are connected with a decrease of their activities in the work process. They could decrease the role of the woman within the work collective, especially regarding collaboration and management. Furthermore, they are objectively useable to maintain the old division of labour within the family and related attitudes that are outlived and to reproduce the specific problems of the working mother.[54]

Later research on the issue confirmed Grandke's concerns. Herta Kuhrig revealed that research carried out on behalf of the advisory committee on women showed already in the late 1970s that disproportional gender roles had developed and were hindering progress considerably.[55] The moral pressure to comply with the projected ideal was felt strongly by most women whilst policies for women were increasingly subsumed into policies for the family.[56] Furthermore, women themselves helped to uphold gender stereotypes by conforming to traditional expectations.[57]

In the GDR, the state organised the emancipation of women in agreement with a specific concept. In addition to their role as mothers, they were encouraged to take on traditional male ideals that were based on successful careers and financial independence. During the Honecker era, the difficulties encountered by women in combining family and career were recognised. Arrangements were made to support the dual role of women, mostly in the form of social benefits and educational privileges. A feminist movement, as developed in the FRG, was opposed by the SED which insisted that the legal provisions in place since 1949 ensured emancipation. Both the West German feminist movement and historians have rejected this passive and, as the statistics show, partial emancipation process. It has been argued that, although it enabled women to achieve independence from their men, the state installed itself in a position of patriarchal dominance.[58] East German women were described as having been duped into thinking that they were emancipated when in fact they were not. Indeed, most women were probably convinced of their equal status in the GDR.

In preparation for the pedagogic conference in summer 1989, a woman wrote to the MfV about the use of stereotypes in schoolbooks. She had analysed a series of schoolbooks used in German language classes, and discovered a systematic use of traditional gender stereotypes. According to her analysis, in the editions of the schoolbook from 1985 and 1986 for school years three to eight, women were consistently depicted in traditionally female professions such as teacher and sales assistant. Young and elderly women were mostly described as in need of help, sick, only averagely intelligent, forgetful, and vain whilst men tended to take charge and have high-powered jobs. In her complaint to the MfV, the woman demanded a revision. She reasoned that the books would influence the views of the young generation, and, crucially, that such a depiction of women was not in line with social and political realities.[59] This letter reflected a specific problem. Statistical evidence suggests that women were not treated on an equal basis with men with regard to salaries, occupation of managerial posts in the economic and political sector, and their role within the family environment. On that level, emancipation apparently had been less than successful. However, the illusion that women were treated equally, that they were fully emancipated and that their expectations were being met by the state, sufficed to influence attitudes and behaviour patterns.[60]

East German women experienced a revival of traditional gender stereotypes after unification when they became part of a modern democracy. Women were greatly over-represented in unemployment figures and many lost their financial independence. To some extent, family planning was taken out of their hands by financial restraints and the application of West German abortion laws. The generous provisions for mothers and their young children that had existed in the GDR were not matched by the social system in the united Germany. Many East German women had enjoyed combining family and career in spite of the physical and mental commitment this required, because it gave them a chance to acquire some independence without giving up the dream of a family. Both concepts were part of the female image. In the united Germany defined by Western concepts, which emphasised self-realisation, it became much harder to combine the two aspects successfully.[61] It is at least debatable which system benefited East German women more. The issue of traditional gender stereotypes constitutes a crucial part of this discussion.

Changing stereotypes

The increase in social benefits and improved legal protection had a remarkable impact on the position of women in the GDR. By introducing

new legal rights for women such as the abortion law in 1972, the state managed to influence both social and psychological attitudes. Although this law proved a controversial issue, combined with the social benefits introduced under Honecker, it gave women more freedom to organise their lives and a chance to develop greater self-reliance and self-confidence.[62] The state's effort to treat women independently of their marital status had a positive impact on single mothers' social position as it removed the stigma attached to single parenthood. In fact, single mothers benefited most from the regulations regarding social security that were implemented in the 1970s and 1980s. Most of them had been designed to ensure that full-time employment and motherhood could be successfully combined even outside marriage. By 1989, 52% of children were born to unmarried mothers.[63]

All mothers received special support, making them less dependent on a male provider. Maternity leave lasted for one year in the 1980s. Depending on how many children a women had, new mothers received a cash amount, and day care for children was made available for a token contribution.[64] Childcare constituted a major political issue in the 1970s and 1980s, and specifically in the early 1970s, the state made great efforts to improve existing facilities and build new day care centres. By the early 1980s, most mothers were able to leave their children in day care close to where they lived.[65] Furthermore, employment guarantees were given to pregnant women and new mothers, which helped them to ensure a secure upbringing for their children. Mothers were treated preferentially with regard to shift work.[66]

The state also encouraged women into further education to ensure their professional qualification. In 1972, it became obligatory for factories and other employers to encourage and support actively further training of women.[67] While this was a necessary precondition of technical change, which required qualified workers, these policies also increased the self-confidence of women in the workplace, at home, and in public life. The state made a concerted effort to support women in various ways, and the high percentage of women who were employed full-time and had children highlighted the success of its policies.[68] It has to be remembered that the aim behind these social benefits and legal provisions was primarily the full-time employment of most able-bodied women and not their full political and social emancipation in the way the West German feminist movement understood it. In this limited sense at least, the strategies proved very successful.

Much subtle pressure was applied to women persuading them to work full-time. Women were targeted by propaganda describing full-time employment as a social and political necessity ('gesellschaftliches

Erfordernis') implying that women who continued to work part-time were undermining the state in some way.[69] In cooperation with employers, the state even tried to stop women from moving to new places of work that offered more suitable working hours.[70] The argument that women who worked part-time were supporting old traditions of gender specific work designation applied further moral pressure.[71] In addition to various legal provisions and other measures which made it difficult not to work or to work only part-time, the image of women built up in the media was defined by a tight concept of women's function in socialist society.[72] An ideal was developed that defined women primarily as working mothers. Central policy was intended to achieve two things in particular. First, economic requirements had to be met, and second, the Marxist understanding of emancipation had to be applied. Furthermore, Honecker was integrating women into the socialist society by providing them with reasons to support the regime: social security and a conviction that they had a right to be treated on an equal basis with men.[73]

The combination of support and pressure that the state used to influence women proved successful to a certain extent. However, the strain felt by many women who could not cope with the double burden of raising children and working full-time undermined their health.[74] For both men and women, but especially for the latter, the incidence of psychological illness increased in the 1980s, which included an apparent increase in alcohol related psychoses.[75] Gunnar Winkler points out that, in spite of much legislation and research regarding the health of women, the practical treatment they received fell short of stated goals with attention focusing on traditional areas such as motherhood and pregnancy. The fundamental conflicts that disproportionately burdened the female population were not resolved.[76]

Altogether, the SED's policy towards women under Honecker suffered from the insistence on principles which were initially very progressive. Eventually, however, women were held back by the same rules that had been designed to encourage and emancipate them. Nevertheless, many women participated in the illusion of emancipation and were loyal towards the state that had granted it because they felt both valued and needed. A similar loyalty, although based on other circumstances, was found among writers.

Inspiration and loyalty

The state's attitude to writers, quite simply, depended on the individual's political orientation. The aim of the SED was to use writers as

political educators and ambassadors who, at the same time, brought hard currency into the GDR. In return, they could expect privileges including a certain political power, as Heiner Müller pointed out in 1992:

> Living in the GDR was above all living in a material. […] Here there is a particular relationship to power, a fascination with power, a rubbing up against power and taking part in power, even perhaps submitting oneself to power in order to take part.[77]

Müller's interpretation was valid only for a small part of the writing community. Nevertheless, his view highlighted both the privilege that was available and, if accepted, its limitations. By describing the fascination of power, Müller introduced the issue of participation. The accelerating devaluation of official ideological language as a means of communication with the people necessitated a substitute, which some prominent writers provided. However, they could easily become dangerous to a state concerned about its foreign image and aware of its need for effective propaganda. Their close proximity to power also made them vulnerable. The ambivalence of their situation provided some writers with inspiration, others it threatened but many felt a certain loyalty towards this dictatorial state.

Integration was a prime concern for Honecker. In November 1973, the decision of the VIII Party Conference of the SED to better the social security provisions for writers was realised in the form of better pension schemes and other social benefits. Furthermore, 25 million Marks in additional money was put up for cultural funds, 10% of which the Ministry for Culture (MfK) used for aiding special cultural projects.[78] The support network for young talents was also expanded during the 1970s. Special attention was given to their literary development, although some initiatives were never fully realised when their wider implications became apparent. At the cultural conference of the FDJ in 1975, for example, the suggestion was made to publish a literary magazine for young authors to give them an opportunity to publish, experiment, and discuss issues that were of interest to them. However, the magazine soon ran into difficulties as neither the FDJ nor the publishing house wanted to take on the responsibility. Eventually, editorial restrictions were introduced and *Temperamente* was published only four times a year instead of the intended six times.[79]

Censorship posed a key problem. Intended to control the ideas, which might affect the public, it was employed to prevent political and literary

corruption. The SED demanded optimism and very often positivism in literature. Kurt Hager and the MfK controlled the membership of the AdK and awards, which conferred both status and a financial lifeline to writers.[80] However, increasingly from the 1970s onwards, authors were allowed to publish their books in West Germany. This practice gave them not only the satisfaction of seeing the book published but also money and recognition in countries outside the Eastern Bloc. Thereby they acquired some protection from the GDR authorities.

Small symptoms, such as the difficulties surrounding the publication of a literary magazine and the banning of Stefan Heym's *Fünf Tage im Juni* in 1974, indicated an increase in tension. However, it was the Biermann affair which seriously undermined the cordial relations between the writer's community and the state.[81] In November 1976, when Biermann gave a concert in Cologne he was not permitted to re-enter the GDR – a measure which state authorities had planned in detail in 1973.[82] Effectively, the SED had attacked a singer with communist convictions who became a cult figure among parts of the young generation. Biermann's popularity among the writing community and generally in the GDR has been overrated but the regime's decision to exile a committed communist called into question the validity of recent compromises. The state was seen to be attacking the position of the literary intelligentsia in the GDR.

After the relatively calm early years, a change in policy had taken place. It was partly based on economic problems but also on Honecker's activities to consolidate his power.[83] Combined with the state's harsh reaction to the letter written by prominent writers calling for a reversal of Biermann's expatriation, it destroyed the optimism of the early 1970s. In many writers, such as Sarah Kirsch, it effected a refusal to continue their participation in a dictatorship.[84] Christa Wolf reflected a general feeling, when she explained in 1982:

> At that time, I lived very much with the feeling of standing with my back to the wall and being unable to take another step. I had to get over a certain period in which it seemed that there was absolutely no possibility to work anymore. The year 1976 was a turning point in our cultural–political development, marked outwardly by the expatriation of Biermann.[85]

Biermann had found support when he first came to the GDR and been given more than one chance to accommodate himself within the political requirements of the state. Like Biermann, many other talents

refused to oblige the dictatorial state. Often, however, the regime hoped to win back political delinquents and felt an obligation to do so, as Mielke reminded university rectors a decade after the Biermann affair: 'Leading officials and functionaries […] need to react even more sensitively to problems, conflicts, and worries and, in everyday life, need to keep up a close relationship with the people, as the party has demanded and to win back those people, who have been mislead by the enemy.'[86] However, once someone had been labelled an 'enemy', a process of repression and persecution followed which was irreversible.[87] In October 1976, Reiner Kunze had been excluded from the SV and was forced to leave the GDR in 1977.[88] In December 1977, Rudolf Bahro was arrested for attacking the political system in *Die Alternative* (1977) and was later bought out by West Germany. In 1979, Stefan Heym and eight writers were excluded from the SV for taking a stand on publishing rights and censorship. For many writers, including many from the young generation, censorship, withdrawal of work permits, and the tactics of the MfS made work and life in the GDR insufferable. In the early 1980s the percentage of young writers leaving was especially high, as it was almost impossible to be published, earn a living, and not be criminalised.

Younger writers especially, who wanted to develop their talent whilst struggling to keep a regular job were in constant danger of being criminalised on the grounds of asocial behaviour.[89] Critical voices among the younger generation of writers found little support within the system other than from individuals such as Franz Fühmann. In addition, the MfS used organisations such as the 'Zentrum Junger Autoren' for the control of young authors. It also made efforts to discourage actively independent writers by undermining their self-confidence and by offering funding and publication opportunities if they took on specially designed and politically harmless projects.[90] Those who refused to participate in the dictatorship were forced into isolation.

In contrast, the state failed to control the activities of established writers within the international peace movement during the early 1980s. In spite of constant threats from Erich Honecker, Kurt Hager, and the MfS, these writers continued their work and published books, when necessary outside the GDR. Christa Wolf expressed her own concern and experience in a letter she wrote to Hager regarding the attacks on Heym in 1979: 'I predict that everybody, who voices a worry or protects a colleague from defamation, will soon be lined up alongside the suspects. I feel the results of such suspicions clearly.'[91] The campaign against Stefan Heym reflected the various ways in which the state tried to apply

pressure. These strategies went from denunciation in the media over restraints regarding his public engagements to restrictions on the publication of his works.[92] Nevertheless, he continued to write and was able to organise the politically controversial 'Berliner Begegnung' in 1981.[93] The position of writers in the GDR often resembled a balancing act, whereby various aspects of life in a dictatorship came together and, depending on the circumstances, conspired to either inspire or crush the individual.

The state was unable to control its relations with writers by the simple approach of support and limitation, even with the help of influential people such as Hermann Kant. During the 1980s, especially writers who had an international reputation, but also young and unrecognised talents, outgrew the limitations that were applied. It could be argued that this process was partly a measure of the success of those who tried to find compromises rather than initiating open opposition. However, at the same time these privileges were part of the policy package devised for intellectuals by the state, which achieved two crucial things. It ensured some legitimacy for the state's political claims on power and prevented many of the most important writers from leaving the country. Although not entirely successful, the state achieved some of its goals over a notably long period. Up to the late 1980s, the writing community occupied one of the most privileged positions within socialist society. In return, the state received critical loyalty.

In contrast, the Christian community experienced a situation whereby privileges were limited, although the regime offered participation. However, the state was in no position to ignore the Churches. The international community, even more so than in relation to the literary intelligentsia, was watching the regime.

The threat of a 'Kirchenkampf'

By the 1970s it had become apparent that religion and the Churches would continue to exist in the GDR. Furthermore, Honecker was intent on achieving international recognition of the GDR with the help of the Churches. As the MfS, the 'Staatssekretär für Kirchenfragen', and the 'Arbeitsgruppe Kirchenfragen' in the ZK SED pointed out repeatedly, he could not be seen to conduct a 'Kirchenkampf': 'The national policy on Church issues influences the international standing of the GDR.'[94] Throughout its existence, the GDR was careful not to be linked with the dark sides of Germany's history. The representatives of the Churches, when given the opportunity, exploited this fear for their own

protection. The regime was afraid of accusations that might give the impression of a 'Kirchenkampf', not only before the agreement of 1978 but even more so during the 1980s when the East German Churches became more prominent on the international stage. This fear regarding the international image of the GDR was not surprising considering both Honecker's interest in international recognition and how dependent, in economic terms, the GDR had become on West Germany in particular during the late 1970s and early 1980s. The standard of living of the GDR was bolstered by loans from capitalist governments, and political stability hinged upon a continuous rise of those standards. Church policy was a sensitive issue both in terms of foreign and domestic affairs. Honecker confronted it by promising equal treatment for Christians in order to entice participation.

Ulbricht's policy of confrontation had been a success insofar as it forced the Protestant Churches to establish an institutional framework, the BEK, which was separate from the West German Churches. Furthermore, the Christian community had been unable to deal with discrimination and persecution, especially if aimed at its children, over a prolonged period. The introduction of the 'Jugendweihe', for example, had put great pressure on the Churches as it divided Christians at the grass roots level from the Church hierarchy. Bishop Werner Krusche, who played an active role in Church–state relations, described the effects of the Churches' stance on this issue and pointed out how much it had undermined the position of the Church hierarchy, which had been prepared to take on the state but had found little support in the parishes: 'The experience of breaking apart and that the parishes left us in the lurch – that was a shock'.[95] According to Krusche, this experience resulted in a marked reluctance among the Church hierarchy to provoke open hostilities with the regime, an attitude that characterised relations throughout the 1970s and 1980s. The position of the Churches had been undermined further by the constitution of 1968 which used merely a general clause on the relations between the state and the Churches and thereby replaced formerly very specific regulations. Only spiritual ministry and activities useful to the community were still legally protected. Any additional agreements had to be negotiated with the state. Although this was still a step short of incorporating the principle of separation of Church and state into the constitution, as had happened in other Eastern Bloc countries, it made the Churches more dependent on a workable relationship with the state.[96] Finally, Ulbricht's aggressive policies had also caused an increasing isolation of Christians in everyday life. These circumstances encouraged political

compromises and prevented the Churches from following a confrontational course of action.[97]

During the 1970s, SED policy regarding the Churches changed. In the first half of the 1970s, the state took steps to improve the political relations to the Churches in a way which benefited the hierarchy without improving the day-to-day experiences of the average Christian. Although it was important for the BEK that its entire Executive Board was allowed to travel to Geneva in March 1972, that building programmes were given permission to proceed, and that state officials finally recognised the activities of the Churches' social agencies in March 1973, other policies continued to undermine the position of Christians in the GDR.[98] In particular the Youth Law of 1974 was perceived as a profound attack on the Christian community.[99] Both the 'Konferenz der Evangelischen Kirchenleitungen in der DDR' (KKL) and the Catholic bishops criticised the basic presuppositions on which the Act was based. In it, Marxism–Leninism was depicted as the world view of all young people and the definition of socialist personality was potentially one-sided and incorporated discriminatory tendencies. With regard to the obligatory military service, it did not even mention the alternative 'Baueinheiten'.[100] It effectively discriminated against young Christians by attempting to isolate them within the social category 'youth' through the application of ideological conditions. Between 1970 and 1974, the reports given at the synods of the regional Churches and the BEK stated repeatedly that the situation of young Christians within the education system was deteriorating.[101] A slight improvement, however, was noted from 1975 onwards. In September of that year, the BEK concluded: 'Currently, we are hearing less regarding open discrimination of Christian children within the education system. Of course, difficulties linked to an atmospheric head wind are not really overcome and probably will never be overcome.'[102] Although the relationship between the state and the Churches was improving on the level of high politics, due to Honecker's drive to achieve international recognition for the GDR, the average Christian experienced discrimination on a regular basis.

In this context, nothing had more far-reaching consequences than the agreement between the Protestant Churches and the state of 6 March 1978. It changed the relationship between the state and the Churches and had a direct impact on the situation of Christians. The press report on the unique event included Schönherr's statement, which directly linked the situation of every single Protestant to the relationship between the regime and the BEK by stating that: 'The relationship

between Church and state is as good as the individual Christian experiences it on the spot.'[103] This constituted a huge psychological achievement for Christians in the GDR. As a result of the propaganda U-turn, the population, including local magistrates, overzealous teachers, and keen SED members, who were making everyday life difficult for Church members, were told to treat their Christian fellow citizens as equals. It was characteristic for East German society that this did not put an end to discrimination, which remained part of Christians' daily experiences in many parts of the GDR, and often reflected the attitudes of the local SED functionaries.[104] Change at the communal level was slow, as Bishop Eberhard Natho recognised in 1979:

> Everybody carries his or her experiences and disappointments. There are small signs that the 6.3.[1978] initiated more than just a temporary improvement and long-term changes can be expected. We have noticed that children, who were not members of the pioneers, have been admitted to higher education [EOS]; that it has become easier to talk to officials within local government. However, as previously there are serious problems about which no sensible talks are possible and revenge is taken, power is abused.[105]

Suspicions arose quickly that the agreement had been a tactical concession to silence critical voices. Critics reacted negatively to the introduction of the military education programmes at schools from September of the same year but some refrained from public criticism so as not to undermine the fragile dialogue between the state and the BEK. A report drawn up in the early 1980s for the 'Staatssekretär für Kirchenfragen' stated the negative reaction of Church staff working within 'Offene Jugendarbeit' to the new School Rules introduced in November 1979:

> Here we have to note that even progressive representatives of the Churches are undermined in their positions following the introduction of new terms within the educational conception for schools, such as the use of 'communist education'. Because many of them see church policy since the 6.3.78 as a tactical concession by the party and government, they have only little trust towards the stability of state decisions. They doubt that church policy will really become a long-term policy orientated towards the integration and equality of all citizens.[106]

In spite of the shortcomings, some improvements were made which had a positive and direct impact on the Christian community. From the mid-1970s onwards, Honecker had encouraged efforts to integrate Christians

more effectively into socialist society. The FDJ made special efforts to involve them in their work, as a report from the 'Staatssekretär für Kirchenfragen' pointed out in 1983: 'The department for legal issues has regular talks with selected participants (from the FDJ, members of the BL etc.) to increase the impact of young Christians within the FDJ.'[107] While it had long been an issue in both camps whether Christians should become members of the mass youth organisation, their membership became increasingly accepted. Generally, the Christian community became more confident in the expectations and demands it directed at the state while the regime started to show signs of growing impotency.

In the notes of the 'Staatssekretär für Kirchenfragen', a stubborn, sometimes apparently helpless, insistence on the terms of the 1978 covenant is evident throughout the 1980s. A decade later, in 1988, Honecker even based his crucial talks with Bishop Leich on the clauses of the 1978 agreement.[108] More importantly, up to 1989 the Politburo insisted on seeing the citizens' movements developing within the Churches as an internal problem of the Churches and not the state.[109] This approach proved futile as Church leaders continually evaded the regime's demands for their disengagement from politics.[110] Furthermore, by withdrawing from the problem, the state gave an impression of helplessness.[111] Although the state secretary repeatedly threatened to renounce the concessions of 1978, the covenant was kept in place to avoid a 'Kirchenkampf' reminiscent of the darker sides of German history.[112] During the latter part of the 1980s, as the state came under pressure from the Churches, the same agreement was used as a protective tool, reminding the Churches of their duties and promises.

The relationships between the state, the Churches, and the Christian communities were never simple. Nevertheless, improved communication and the positive experiences during the Luther celebrations in 1983 encouraged a more positive evaluation of Church–state relations. In 1984, a report for the synod in Berlin-Brandenburg concluded:

> In matters of principle, intensive talks have taken place, which were marked by a growing hear-ability of the partners in those talks. However, the partners arrived at no solution regarding controversial questions about the matter itself. But there have been encouraging examples of the will to constructive single-issue solutions. In general, the work of the Churches is not held up.[113]

The state continuously refused to give universal concessions to the Churches, as this would have afforded them a political role as

representatives of the Christian community.[114] Only individual cases brought to the attention of the political leadership by representatives of the Churches were dealt with, and often solved, as long as the Churches did not lay claim to a more general representative role.[115] In spite of the continuing difficulties based on the lack of general solutions, a dialogue existed that provided the Churches with vital links to the political leadership of the GDR. This enabled them to find compromises which many within the hierarchy, including controversial figures such as Manfred Stolpe, thought crucial to the continuance of Christian life in the GDR.

The SED tried to control the hierarchy of the Churches but succeeded only in infiltrating some parts with the help of the MfS and in partly subduing political activities. The party never fully grasped the democratic nature of Church life so the Church leadership was able to protect both individuals and the interests of the Churches. The lack of centralisation in particular hampered all state activity meant to control the increasing political involvement of the Protestant Churches.[116] This structure allowed different personalities to interact with government and party functionaries on various levels without committing the entire Protestant community to any particular policy. In contrast, the attempts at cooperation with the regime alienated many members of the Churches and opened up protective space, which was made available to all sections of society. In spite of their differences, some common problems characterised central policy which concerned all four social groups. Their impact on the stability of the regime will be considered in the next section.

Common issues

Central policy was influenced by considerations and problems that were relevant to all four social groups. The political flaws that will be discussed below weakened the regime and the effectiveness of its responses to social, economic, and political change. Attention will be given to the state authorities' fear of cooperation between dissident parts of the social groups. Furthermore, their inability to cater for overlaps between groups and the tendency to categorise sections of society made control difficult. In addition, Honecker's policies undermined political continuity and thereby introduced the possibility of change. In the long term, the regime proved unable to deal with the consequences of the policies introduced in the 1970s. These general issues highlight how dependent the regime was on the groups' willingness to accept the compromises that the party was offering.

A dangerous link

From the late 1970s onwards, the MfS showed a growing concern that elements of the young generation, the cultural sphere, and the Churches were linking up to form a politically potent opposition. The problem became acute in the late 1970s, as was noted by the HA XX, a major section of the MfS under Major-General Kienberg, which was responsible for securing the superstructure of society ('gesellschaftlicher Überbau'), in particular youth, culture, the Churches, and the SED. In 1977, the 'Auswertungs-und Informationsgruppe' (AIG) of the HA XX warned:

> In parts, close cooperation between hostile and negative forces from the arts and cultural sector, the Churches, the intelligentsia, youth, and students is noticeable and this complex character needs to be looked at thoroughly by political-operative activity.[117]

This statement demonstrates the basic fear felt by the MfS regarding any such connection, especially as these groups were in a position to reach both the East German public and the international community. The regime considered these youth, writers and the Churches to be crucial to the stability of the state and allocated major departments within party and government institutions to their administration and control. In this context, gender divisions were not of major importance to the MfS because they suspected a male figure behind every imagined or real plot, even in the 1980s when women and women's groups became a decisive part of the citizens' movement.[118]

The three groups at the centre of MfS interest contained active elements which, while they were not necessarily opposing the state, developed an independent initiative that partly opposed central policies, especially in relation to the issues of peace and the environment. Furthermore, the MfS had long recognised young people, the cultural sphere, and the Christian community as especially at risk from corruptive influences. It linked one person in particular to this process, as the Minister for Culture since 1973, Hans-Joachim Hoffmann pointed out at a meeting of the SV on 23 November 1976. At the centre of the discussion stood Wolf Biermann and his recent expatriation: 'Biermann was the person, where those three lines – Church, artists, and youth – came together. That is class struggle.'[119] Not only were young people in particular unhappy about the decision of the SED to expel Biermann from the GDR, their disappointment found a strong reflection in the troubled cultural sphere. After the Biermann affair, the MfS drastically increased

its surveillance of the writing community with the creation of a specific department, the HA XX/7, for the publishing sector and the Berlin section of the SV.[120] They also proposed various changes with regard to the leading functionaries of the AdK and the SV.[121] At the same time, the first young writers began to construct the Prenzlauer Berg concept of withdrawal and, although illusionary, protection from political involvement. The Protestant Churches entered the equation with the help of two events. Firstly, they were able to touch and interest young non-Christian people through the independent peace movement of the late 1970s. In addition, the agreement reached with the state in 1978 provided the Protestant Churches with more security and stability enabling them to develop their youth programmes and to offer some shelter to people who had encountered problems, political or otherwise. The introduction of military education into schools in September 1978, at a time when people all over the world were greatly concerned about keeping the peace, had the important side effect of bringing together young people, the Churches, and writers in various peace initiatives.

This combination of interests was not a natural link for any of these groups to make. Nevertheless, circumstances changed in the late 1970s to bring them closer together and presented them with shared concerns regarding life in the GDR. Honecker's policy of privileging groups through specific social or political benefits also encouraged the isolation of groups from each other. In accordance with the sectional thinking of the state, groups were treated differently and began to behave according to the expected traits of their specific section. Social policy proved a powerful social tool in this respect; a process seen most clearly in the positive psychological changes that took place among women during that period. However, the categorisation employed by the state was not in a position to account for or reach subgroups. Personalities or far-reaching events had the effect of drawing various groups and subgroups together in spite of social, political, and religious differences. This happened in the late 1970s and again in 1989. The MfS was right to be concerned. In addition to the threat of cooperation between the social groups, SED policy contained basic structural flaws in relation to the four groups, which undermined the political system. The consequences of those shortcomings will be discussed in the following section to highlight long-term developments.

Problems of policy

The simple categorisation applied by the regime to GDR society excluded crucial parts of that society and allowed it to create political

space for their concerns. Symptomatic of this development were numbers of young people who went to Church for non-religious reasons just to be able to express opinions; the female voices that declared their inability to carry the double burden or had a special interest in re-militarisation and the environment but were ignored; the Christians who were effectively prevented from finding their way into socialist society; and the writers who were looking for alternative ways of expressing themselves and for subjects that seemed relevant to them but decided to leave the GDR because they were not given the creative space they required.

Second, a lack of flexibility was inherent in the political system. It was highlighted in the late 1980s, when the regime proved unable to take back the political and social initiative. This became most apparent with regard to the overspending on social benefits that was not stopped in spite of warnings from economic experts. The problem was due mainly to the centralised structure of the party, which was overly focused on Honecker.

The concept of creating a socialist personality type, which was fundamental to state policies throughout the existence of the GDR, vastly overestimated the powers of any political leadership.[122] Furthermore, Honecker and other functionaries ignored primary information on the state of the nation.[123] During meetings of the Politburo in the 1980s, Honecker demanded that enough fruit and vegetables were made available to the population without any consideration of the economic limitations which had caused shortages in the first place.[124] Similarly, it is unlikely that Mielke used much of the work done in the Law School in Potsdam where MfS officers graduated. Nevertheless, the combination of the petition system, the work of the MfS, and institutions such as the 'Institut für Meinungsforschung' ensured that politicians at the highest level had sufficient access to relevant information on social, economic, and political issues that affected the population.[125]

The inflexible approach to the implementation of policies and the creation of new ones undermined their political effectiveness. To take an example from gender relations, economic changes in the 1980s resulted in the restriction of professional choice. This process brought to the fore more traditional attitudes towards the position of women within society. Their professional achievements were the first to be sacrificed when the need for less qualified labour arose.[126] In addition, the new increase in female part-time workers towards the end of the 1980s stood in stark contrast to official policies. The state tried continually to improve gender equality without the ability to alter its approach in response to changing requirements.

The regime was unable to cater for or control the complex make-up of East German society. Centralisation caused the structural flaws of the political system to result in various problems encountered within the institutions that were used to transfer policy into society. These will be discussed extensively in the next chapter, which focuses on the activity of political institutions. However, in spite of the inflexibility that dominated policy-making and was characteristic for the political elite, continuity was lost with regard to foreign policy. Thereby, Honecker undermined some basic ideological principles. In contrast, social and economic policy suffered from ill-considered attempts at continuity after initial changes had been introduced.

Loss of continuity

Continuity was a crucial word in the political vocabulary of the GDR. Party programmes, political speeches, and propaganda in general used it throughout the 1970s and 1980s, mainly because it gave some legitimacy to an increasingly unpopular regime. Reminders of the fascist past combined with the anti-fascist myth of the foundation of the GDR in 1949 helped to stabilise the GDR. The concept made it difficult to oppose the political leadership.[127]

The problems of the late 1970s and 1980s were partly a result of Honecker's earlier decisions to increase politicisation and of the economic problems of the late 1970s. Furthermore, the effects of the German–German rapprochement helped to undermine political legitimacy as communications between East and West Germany increased. Just enough information was available to feed a utopian dream of paradise on the other side of the border, and the constant availability of an apparently viable alternative lifestyle undermined the indoctrination of the population. From the 1970s onwards, the influence of the West on youth culture grew continuously. Music and fashion inspired fringe groups such as punks, who defined themselves by wearing specific clothes and listening to a certain type of music. It encouraged independent cultural strains that the state was unable to accept or deal with and attacked aggressively.

In the same period, the GDR ceased to be a closed system entirely dominated by the politics of the Communist Bloc. It also made decisions on the international level, which to some GDR citizens suggested a much closer relationship with the former enemy than seemed acceptable in view of the GDR's ideological framework. Furthermore, the economic success of West Germany cast doubt over the performance of

the GDR economy. By the mid-1970s, GDR citizens began to ask questions to this effect, as illustrated by one SED report from 1974: 'Is it true that the GDR has trade debts with capitalist states, especially West Germany, and why don't we pay them off?'[128] Such inquiries contained as much accusation as basic logical consideration of the existing ideological restrictions, which still decried Western states as enemies. SED policies regarding German–German relations appeared considerably less consistent than they had been under Ulbricht.

Furthermore, the world economic crisis in the late 1970s undermined the social and economic planning of the GDR and put the government under financial pressure. It was forced to make further compromises with the FRG. The loans taken on in the early 1970s in order to get the ambitious social and economic plan off the ground were now added to, dramatically increasing debt levels. From the end of the 1970s onwards, it was clear to economic planners, if not to Honecker, that the GDR was living beyond its means. The compromises made with the FRG and other Western countries as a result of this situation, such as further credit and the permission frequently given to writers to publish books in the FRG in exchange for hard currency, showed how desperate the regime was.[129] In fact, these compromises attacked the core of the socialist state's being, the Marxist–Leninist understanding of world forces, as it became ever more dependent on help from capitalist states. Effectively, the developments in the economic, political, and cultural sphere that had been encouraged by Honecker's policy of integration and partial liberalisation inclined the state towards sharing the initiative and towards reacting to impulses that came from within society. In particular the position of the MfS, which was not allowed to intervene in any major way in the developments it was recording, showed the restrictions applied by the SED.[130] The tendency to accept compromises clashed repeatedly with more long-term concepts and policies still in place, especially within Church policy.

The late 1970s were difficult for the GDR in many areas. Reacting to the fear of a nuclear escalation, the world peace movement began to make an impact. The stationing of nuclear missiles in West Germany in particular enlivened peace initiatives in both German states. In the GDR, they provided a good starting point for oppositional forces, especially as the state refused to accommodate them. The SED proved unable to tap popular potential on this issue that represented an important part of the socialist camp's political concept. Furthermore, it gave the Churches the chance to act as protective force for people who had fallen foul of the system thereby attracting people who otherwise had never considered working within the Christian community.

Cultural policy, specifically affecting writers, was undermined by developments from the mid-1970s. The increased exposure to the West and the links to the Churches of those who could not work anywhere else gave any controversies a dangerous political edge. In the early 1980s, in response to the international peace movement, many important writers became involved in the discussion of related issues. In the process, they acquired a political role beyond their professional calling, which helped to further the connection between writers, youth, and the Churches – a development that was noted repeatedly and with concern by the state from the late 1970s onwards.[131] Nevertheless, the state proved unable and often unwilling to integrate young writers more effectively into the established writing community. The only political method that was applied consistently was control and pressure from the MfS.

The state's policy on Churches and Christians underestimated the political implications of 1978. The agreement enabled the Protestant Churches to provide a protective space making them attractive to young people, intellectuals, and single-issue groups. This constituted a potent combination, as the later 1980s were to show. In addition, some fundamental misunderstandings of the structures of the Protestant Churches led to an amazingly ineffective handling of problems. The decision to leave the Protestant Churches to deal with the growing citizens' movements presupposed a centralised structure of the Churches similar to that of the state, which simply did not exist. The result of Honecker's approach was the creation of space for additional communication channels adding new layers to the straightforward relationship between the state and the population that Honecker had been trying to maintain. His policies created mental and physical spaces within the political system that were used creatively by the population.

The developments of the late 1970s and the 1980s undermined both the continuity that Honecker so often laid claim to and various long-term strategies within the political, social, and economic sector. They also forced the state into a more passive role, where it continued to initiate but was also forced to react to political progress. This situation increased the SED's need for the cooperation of the various social groups in order to uphold the status quo. It allowed a social diversity to develop beyond the control of central political bodies. Following on from the limitations of central policy that have been shown, the next chapter will concentrate on the governmental and party institutions to supplement the analysis of the regime's position. By focusing on the shortcomings of this system, opportunities for outsiders become apparent. Such openings constituted the base on which diversity, participation and, thereby, stability within East German society was founded.

3
State Institutions

Success and failure

The following analysis will again use the regime's categorisation of society, as the institutions and their tasks corresponded to it. The political system's structural crudity, inflexibility, and strong dependency on specific powerful individuals will be discussed and also its long-term impact on the population. The East German people, who lived their lives within but also beyond the centralised network of institutions provided by the regime, still relied on concepts and attitudes previously acquired from it. Nevertheless, the regime's comprehensive approach ensured that the population was constantly confronted with demands to develop socialist principles of collectivism and a political consciousness committed to basic tenets of the socialist idea. GDR citizens constituted a social unit that was extremely dependent on the country's political structure – more so than was the case in other East European countries.[1] Crucially, however, the regime was unable to make all-encompassing provisions for the different sections of society and to address effectively the entire population. This situation, in particular, encouraged the development and use of alternative structures.

Under Honecker most party and government institutions showed signs of increasing inflexibility and a tendency to suppress initiative. The FDJ, for example, had become an empty shell to many of its young members. Already in 1984, a seventeen-year-old FDJ member expressed her concern regarding the organisation's viability: 'Sometimes, I think that the FDJ is not a living organisation anymore.'[2] This statement reflected a wider feeling among GDR citizens. By the late 1970s, organisations such as the FDJ, the Society for German–Soviet Friendship (DSF), the DFD, the CDU, and to some extent the SED, which were recognised

as necessary stepping stones towards a more privileged lifestyle, had acquired an image that lacked animation, enthusiasm, and drive. They found it difficult to fulfil adequately their role as communication channels within the political system. Both the DFD and the FDJ were repeatedly criticised for not living up to the communist party's expectations. This situation forced other agencies to take on this role, inspired individual functionaries to facilitate it, and encouraged alternative networks to develop.

Günter Gaus, in particular, observed a tendency to avoid official institutions as much as possible during the 1980s.[3] However, his concept of a niche society allows neither for the variety of attitudes and lifestyles among GDR citizens nor for the many attempts by parts of the population to communicate with the regime through various institutions by writing petitions and even by informing for the MfS. Membership numbers of the various mass organisations were higher than ever in the mid-1980s and, in fact, the cooperation of most citizens maintained the regime until the last two years of the 1980s. Whilst it is appropriate to describe certain institutions as stagnant, society itself continued to develop in reaction to the ambiguous political system which confronted it. The rigidity of the institutions was a challenge to certain sections of society, among them the more exposed social groups such as youth, writers, women, and Christians, to resist total control and use their own initiative to moderate a hazardous situation. Many of the political bodies that seemed in limbo during the 1980s were reformed from within their own membership in 1988 and 1989. A gap exists between the description of the political system and the development of GDR society in response to the activities of its political institutions.[4]

In many ways, the government and party institutions offered opportunities to the various social groups. In some cases, they facilitated their political and social impact on society. The SV was crucial to a writer's position in the GDR in spite of its internal divisions and the need to comply with the regime's wishes in most cases. Similarly, the 'Abteilung Frauen' of the ZK SED ensured a continuous stream of legislation in support of women. In the GDR, an individual's entire life was watched over and influenced by specific institutions. In a similar vein the regime ensured that specific social or professional groups were structured, organised, and integrated into socialist society according to the tasks allocated to them by Marxist–Leninist ideology. Exceptional circumstances applied to the Churches and religious groups, which maintained separate institutions although the regime tried continuously to reach this section of society. Organisations such as the DFD and the FDJ made

special efforts to communicate with young and female Christians. Both the regime and the Christian community benefited from the uniquely autonomous position of the Churches, which is crucial to the under-standing of the institutional environment of GDR society in the 1970s and 1980s.[5] The analysis of institutional activity will highlight the regime's claim and influence on many aspects of everyday life, which markedly reduced the incidence of both individual initiative and independent decision-making. Whilst creating a general feeling of safety, it also fostered resentment amongst those who felt left out on grounds of age, gender, nonconformity or religion.

   In general, the Politburo and the ZK SED were responsible for the application of Marxist–Leninist doctrine. Within the Politburo, which comprised fourteen full members and eight candidates in the 1980s, individual members were responsible for specific policy areas and did not stray outside those areas. Central policy resolutions were prepared in talks between Erich Honecker and the responsible secretary of the ZK SED. Among the individual secretaries, no vote was taken regarding the preparation of specific policies. Furthermore, the members of the ZK SED received the prepared policy document only at the particular meeting at which the resolution would be passed. Afterwards all docu-ments relating to the policy would be taken from them again.[6] This system prevented a collective will in policy-making and meant that a single person was in a position to control great sections of the polity. The comparison of the institutions that had an impact on the situation of the four social groups will shed light on their workings, overlaps, and deficiencies. It will show how they could influence an individual's or group's attitudes and behaviour patterns. The position of youth in particular was marked by the inherent problems of this rigid set-up.

Shaping the young generation

Youth policy was generated and implemented by three different institutions, a situation that was typical for the immense East German bureaucracy. Within the general structure, the ZK SED was primarily responsible for the formulation of the ideological vision and official statements regarding youth. Egon Krenz, the first secretary of the FDJ and Honecker's protégé, became a member in 1973. From 1983 to 1989, he was both the member of the Politburo and the secretary responsible for youth and sport issues. Directly subordinated to Krenz was the 'Jugendkommission' of the Politburo. Outstanding examples of the commission's work were the three Youth Laws, which provided basic

ideological directives.[7] Furthermore, within the ZK SED existed both a department specifically for youth and one for people's education. In addition to the ZK SED, the two Ministries of Education, the MfV, and the Ministry for Higher Education (MFH), drew up educational programmes, supervised the running of all relevant institutions, and ensured the formal ideological upbringing of young GDR citizens. This comprehensive network should have facilitated and focused the efforts of party, government, and the FDJ aimed at the indoctrination of young people. However, it was undermined by three problems, which lowered the effect with regard to accommodating both complexity and communication.

The rigidity of the political system constituted the first major limitation. Beyond the institutions that existed, no others were permitted. This meant that initiatives that came from young people themselves had to find a home within existing ones and comply with their primary objective, indoctrination. Alternative groups such as punks but also homosexual groups found it impossible to either become an accepted part of the existing structure or set up their own organisations. The FDJ had very little interest in catering for fringe groups and, as a result, these were most likely to turn to the Churches for support. Only in the late 1980s did the regime overcome its reluctance to accept and provide for groups on the fringes of society, although it still made clear its reservations and expected their subordination to official requirements.[8] One example for this was the 'Sonntags-Club' in Berlin, an important meeting point for homosexuals. At the beginning of 1988, the Berlin magistrate issued the 'Conception regarding dealings with homosexual citizens'. With regard to the independent organisations homosexuals had felt forced to establish in the homophobic environment they encountered in the GDR, it stated:

> In every youth club, two homosexuals can be elected into the club committee to represent the interests of homosexuals. Events for homosexuals do not need to be publicly announced. Thereby, the 'Sonntags-Club' has become superfluous. When events are announced on billboards with titles such as 'Men, fashion and cosmetics', people will know who is meant by it.[9]

Such provisions were entirely insufficient and aimed primarily at controlling rather than at accommodating a specific section of society. It did not prevent the continued existence of the many groups specially founded by homosexuals and other fringe groups.

Even in the mainstream of society, the need of young people for a measure of independence was mostly ignored by the regime. However, sociologists sometimes stated their concerns and made suggestions based on their research. One crucial report, which was researched by the APW in April 1988, recognised the need of young people to establish their own independent organisations, where their opinions were taken seriously and where they had opportunities to act on their own initiative. One school director, who was cited in the report, admitted:

> We cannot force young people to lose their identities. Everybody always must do everything. Everybody must visit all events. We leave not enough space for individuality. Intoxicated on processes. This is valid also for activities outside school and for clothing. It is typical for young people that they want to stress their individuality.[10]

The FDJ in particular was depicted as a very formal organisation, which stood in opposition to the much more flexible alternative agencies created by outsider groups.[11] The shortcomings of the FDJ were the second major problem that severely limited the effectiveness of the institutions catering for the young generation.

Limitations of the FDJ

From the early 1960s onwards, Egon Krenz worked as Secretary of the ZR FDJ and from 1974 as its first secretary. His direct links to the Politburo and the ZK SED reflected the party's influence on the FDJ. In terms of political representation, the FDJ was part of the democratic bloc and had occupied forty seats (8% of all seats) in the GDR parliament since July 1950. The FDJ was a political tool used by party and government institutions to reach young people in their specific social environment.[12] It concerned itself with all aspects of young people's lives including political education at school and in the workplace, admission to higher education, and choice of career after the completion of a degree. It described itself as a reserve troop ('Kampfreserve') of the SED and, in effect, this understanding of its political position limited the FDJ to an executive role.[13] The FDJ officially comprised 2.1 million members in 1988, about 74% of all young people between the ages of 14 and 25. The key aspect of the FDJ's work was to indoctrinate young people, particularly outside school and university. To achieve this, it organised many cultural and political activities that were meant to combine indoctrination with recreation.[14] Young people were the one section of society which the regime hoped to integrate most tightly into the political system. Among youth, this attempt caused much tension.

The APW's analysis from April 1988 stated that young people in the GDR were both politically well educated and politically interested. However, it warned that the constant indoctrination was, first, superfluous because most people had internalised ideological propaganda since a very young age and, second, it was fostering resentment. The report cited the criticism of one nineteen-year-old, who was managing a youth club, as a representative example of general opinion among young people in the age group 14 to 22. Before pointing out the problems of constant indoctrination, he acknowledged its basic success in reaching even very young children:

> It all begins already in the kindergarten. And one doesn't really need to spell it out to them every day, they already know it, ask them. One doesn't need to explain everything again and again; for once one should talk about other problems. At some point, one is fed up to the back teeth, always the same again and again.[15]

Many cultural activities and organisations such as youth clubs were politicised by the FDJ. Within the workplace, young people were organised in 'Jugendbrigaden'. Supervised by the FDJ, they set themselves specific tasks within both the economic sector and political education. From 1969 onwards, 'Jugendausschüsse' were introduced wherever more than thirty young people were working together. In 1980, 43,000 people sat on these youth committees.[16] However, much of this effort to reach young people in the workplace responded to the fact that young people, once they had finished school, tended to leave the FDJ quickly. In this way, many stepped outside a tightly organised and controlled institutional setting, a situation which the state needed to avoid. Nevertheless, cultural activities, social and political privileges were equally prominent features of Honecker's effort to integrate the young generation into socialist society.

From the 1970s onwards, the regime tried to react to the needs of young people. It used the FDJ to support projects such as the Theatre for the Young Generation in Dresden, poetry seminars, youth clubs, and discos. Although the state never managed to satisfy demand in this area, it made a genuine effort. Using the FDJ, the regime tried to communicate with young people. A report from the department for culture within the ZR FDJ from 15 March 1980 stressed the need for integration:

> Future work with and in the youth clubs of the FDJ is orientated towards a varied and interesting leisure activity, which appeals to the different age groups and layers and the higher intellectual demands

of young people. Here it is crucial to turn a socialist awareness of life into the decisive aspect of the atmosphere in youth clubs.[17]

The effort to respond to the needs and wishes of young people was shaped by specific political and educational aims. The SED tried to establish a constant presence of ideology in everyday life and young people especially were in no position to escape this sustained indoctrination. Particularly the third Youth Law from 1974 strengthened the FDJ and increased its responsibilities.

The FDJ's work, however, was criticised repeatedly, especially in the late 1970s and the 1980s when the competition from the Churches' initiatives in the youth sector became more successful, even among the non-Christian youth.[18] Whilst the young generation was generally described in positive terms, with emphasis on their support for the social policies introduced by Honecker and their interest in domestic and international politics, shortcomings of the FDJ leadership were strongly criticised in a survey issued by the 'Abteilung Jugend' of the ZK in 1977: 'One cannot overlook that many party and FDJ leaderships still have difficulties to assess thoroughly the attitudes of young people on a regular basis. In this respect, too little is demanded from leaderships.'[19] Eight years later, in 1985, a report from the local authorities of Magdeburg also adopted a critical approach and pointed out similar shortcomings, including a tendency to ignore the development of youth projects after initial funds had been provided. Furthermore, the authorities in Magdeburg felt that young people were neither sufficiently involved in solving communal, social, and political tasks nor were their efforts in this sector recognised. The political work of the FDJ regarding young people in the workplace focused on economic initiatives and high achievements. Little was done in relation to the spare time of young people and the range of activities on offer. However, the report also indicated that regional initiatives to improve the appeal of the FDJ, as in Salzwedel where a specific work group was founded, had been very successful in attracting young people and limiting the influence of the Churches.[20] Such positive initiatives were exceptions and did not reflect the general work of the FDJ, which continued to be criticised up to 1989 by various political agencies, including the MfS: 'All available information indicates that the political–ideological influence of the FDJ on social processes does not correspond to current demands and is partly insufficient.'[21] This report by the Dresden branch of the MfS was issued in 1984 and assessed the work of the FDJ in the special accommodation

blocs associated with further education courses. It highlighted a fundamental problem.

The criticism directed at the FDJ from the late 1970s onwards indicated the problem it faced. The task of combining political education with interesting and stimulating activities whilst creating an organisation that appealed to broad sections of the young generation was not entirely beyond the FDJ. However, in reaction to its problems in communicating effectively with all sections of the young generation, the organisation began to rely on quantity rather than quality, which was a general occurrence within political institutions throughout the 1980s. In 1980, the FDJ experienced a slump in its membership numbers to 55.8% of those eligible. As a result of this crisis, its primary objective during the 1980s became the registration of as many young people as possible, regardless of any other consideration.[22] Accordingly, the membership numbers rose to an all-time high in 1987 and 1988, although the series of lectures and discussions intended to prepare young people ideologically for their membership in the FDJ became an absolute farce. Everybody was admitted whether they passed the entrance examination or not.[23] In 1984, the HA XX of the MfS directly criticised the formalised character of the FDJ and its tendency to concentrate almost entirely on successes that were visible in statistics: 'In many instances, the activities of the FDJ is measured by factors such as the number of meetings and events, collection of membership contributions.'[24] In spite of the considerable control the organisation had over young people within the school system, in the long term its focus on numbers undermined its influence on young people. Throughout East German society, outward conformity became more important than genuine initiative.

Both the rigid structures and the ineffectiveness of the FDJ contributed to the third problem undermining the work of institutions that surrounded youth: these shortcomings allowed powerful individuals to dominate, to a damaging extent, the entire system with their individual attitudes and convictions. One person stood out: Margot Honecker. She was the only prominent female politician during the 1970s and 1980s and had become head of the MfV in 1963. The MfV had much influence on the implementation of youth policy and Margot Honecker was one of the most independent functionaries within the regime.[25] Her marriage to Erich Honecker had set her apart but her authoritarian attitude established her as one of the most feared people among the political elite.[26] Her status also sustained the position of education and youth as one of the most conspicuous issues in politics.

The role of Margot Honecker

Margot Honecker took a hard-line approach. In the late 1960s, she demanded the development of a clear, conscious, and emotional attachment between young people and the state. She ordered that support for the politics of the SED should become the primary aim of every single school lesson and educational work generally. Furthermore, she strongly supported the creation of a uniform personality type.[27] Accordingly, all educational institutions, from nurseries to universities, especially after the introduction of the revised curricula of 1974, incorporated ideological aspects into every learning situation. Already in the kindergartens, attended by three- to six-year-olds, children were taught basic ideological principles through, for example, visits to the 'Nationale Volksarmee' (NVA). The impact of such an early ideological training on young people's attitudes and behaviour patterns should not be underestimated.

In fact, her conception of education was more ideologically radical than the professed opinions of the ZK SED. The position of the minister was strong enough to develop a variant of communist education that differed from SED guidelines, especially with regard to the treatment of Christians. One report from the CDU drawn up in 1976 pointed out that her demand for an education based on the Marxist–Leninist world view effectively opposed the promise of equal treatment for Christians within the education system as outlined in the SED's party programme.[28] In October 1978, after the VIII Pedagogic Congress, the CDU felt unable to criticise Margot Honecker in spite of controversial statements she had made at the congress relating to the position of teachers with a Christian background. When drafting a letter to her, Gerald Götting, the head of the CDU, decided to delete the one mildly critical paragraph and instead invite her to attend a talk.[29] Margot Honecker insisted that the Marxist–Leninist world view should dominate all aspects and all areas of the education system, an attitude also reflected in the controversial rules for schools of 1979.[30] Representatives of the Churches and individual Christians tried repeatedly to communicate with the MfV but without success. In 1981, Bishop Hempel and President Domsch stated their concerns:

> Regarding people's education, Hempel voiced his impression that the Ministry for People's Education must have 'sworn never to meet a single Christian'. President Domsch mentioned his suspicion that there had been a decision on fundamental principles, which was directed against Christians. Otherwise, cases would not happen again and again.[31]

The attitude and influence of Margot Honecker undermined both state–
Church relations and the work of the 'Staatssekretär für Kirchenfragen'.
While the state secretary's team worked to improve relations, the MfV
consistently refused to deal with the Christian community on a basis of
equality. In spite of its predominantly negative impact, the case of
Margot Honecker also highlighted the possibility of independent initia-
tive within the political system.

Gerhardt Neuner, president of the APW since its foundation in 1970,
pointed out that her extraordinary position had made criticism and
control almost impossible: 'This applied even to secretaries of the ZK
and the relevant departments of the ZK in the "Große Haus". They had
very little influence on the decisions of the minister although with
respect to other ministers and ministries they exercised a right of
control.'[32] In his function as official chief educational theorist and
member of the ZK SED since 1976, Neuner had insights into the power
structure of the regime and also direct access to institutions concerned
with education and youth. His assessment, whilst stressing the power of
an individual minister, also points out the general relationship between
government and party agencies.

The strength of Margot Honecker's position was unique in the context
of the secretaries of the ZK SED and their respective departments. In the
main, the role of the departments of the ZK SED was central to policy-
making procedures and control within the party and government appa-
ratus.[33] The various departments were in charge of the analysis of
information, cooperation with the government, specific institutions
and organisations, and the preparation of party resolutions. This area of
responsibility comprised both policy-making and control of policy
implementation.[34] Although the work of the various departments of
the ZK SED was based on resolutions made by the party congress, the
ZK SED, the Politburo, and the secretariats of the ZK SED, it provided
concrete policies and was concerned with the translation from theoreti-
cal concepts, based on ideological considerations, into applicable meas-
ures.[35] All departments of the ZK SED occupied decision-making
positions within the centralised political apparatus. Furthermore, the
head of each department also controlled other crucial sections of
the political apparatus. In the case of the head of the 'Abteilung Jugend'
this included the Politburo's 'Jugendkommission' and the parliament's
'Jugendausschuß'. That particular person was also a member of the
bureau of the ZR FDJ and controlled the ZIJ and the 'Amt für
Jugendfragen', which devised directives regarding the work of central
and regional government institutions.[36] For example, the 'Abteilung

Jugend' had direct influence on the recruitment process for the 'Amt für Jugendfragen' and was not reluctant to exploit this. At a meeting between the leading members of the 'Amt für Jugendfragen' and the department in 1975, the latter reminded those present of their obligations: 'Everybody sitting here [leading officials from the Amt für Jugendfragen], know very well that they got into their positions with the help of the Abteilung Jugendfragen.'[37] The interlinking of the various departments and agencies was complex but in hierarchical terms clearly organised.

The network of party and government agencies catering for young people was elaborate but not necessarily effective. Both the shortcomings of the institutions and their impact on the people tend to be overlooked. Alternative organisations developed, which catered for outsiders. The ineffectiveness of the FDJ encouraged this process. Furthermore, Margot Honecker undermined the existing institutions by preventing communication and applying a hard-line approach that went beyond official policy. Finally, young people reacted to and participated in the institutions. They even challenged them by leaving, a development which forced the FDJ to increase its efforts, although it did so in a way that proved counterproductive in the long term. The organisation focused on numbers rather than root causes. Nevertheless, the work of the relevant institutions was successful in the limited sense of instilling the Marxist–Leninist ideology in the minds of young people, not necessarily in the shape of a concrete knowledge of doctrine but as a general appreciation of socialist concepts. Even widespread resentment to constant indoctrination did not erase that basic socialisation.

Many overlaps linked institutions to different social groups although structures differed for the four social groups with which this book is concerned. In some aspects, gender politics were more self-contained than other areas simply because, in institutional terms, policy-making was dominated by one department within the ZK SED. No ministry was specifically responsible for the concerns of women although all government and party institutions were involved in the implementation of women's policies.

Institutional shortcomings and emancipation

The institutions that were responsible for women in the GDR had limitations that were typical for the political system. Statistics were a crucial tool employed to decide on the success of the process and the inflexibility of relevant institutions, specifically the 'Abteilung Frauen'

and the DFD encouraged the creation of alternative agencies. However, constant ideological instruction in gender equality left women with high expectations and a confidence that helped most to deal with reality. Furthermore, the security offered instilled in women a loyalty towards the regime. The emancipation process led beyond the flawed work of political institutions.

The 'Abteilung Frauen' in the ZK SED under the leadership of Inge Lange, who was a candidate of the Politburo from 1973 onwards, occupied a central position in policy-making and focused efforts in gender politics.[38] The department's task was made possible by both Honecker's interest in the issue and elaborate legislation in support of women which reinforced its political clout, and put it in a position to determine the agenda of the ZK SED in this sector.[39] Annual programmes of the 'Abteilung Frauen' were shaped by studies on the effectiveness of policies and existing measures such as the 'Frauenförderungsplan', a programme devised on a regular basis to encourage women in the workplace and within further education. The agenda of the department included practical suggestions aimed at solving problems such as the regular provision of consumer goods and school meals. In addition, the 'Abteilung Frauen' used surveys provided by research bodies such as the 'Institut für Meinungsforschung' for its work. It also had control over the various institutions relevant to gender relations.[40] The DFD in particular was obliged to provide regular reports on its work and to accept advice from the department, which also effectively wrote the DFD's programme.[41] In July 1974, for instance it prepared the conclusive speech of the X National DFD Congress.[42] In similar ways, Inge Lange controlled the 'Frauenkommissionen' of the Politburo, of the ZK SED and of the commissions at the local level, the 'Frauenausschüsse' in the factories and the women's magazine *Für Dich*. Even the scientific council, 'Die Frau in der sozialistischen Gesellschaft', which had been set up within the AdW in the 1960s to research the position of women in socialist society, was subordinated to the department.[43] Erich Honecker paid close attention to gender politics and personally influenced decisions in this sector.[44] His initiative enabled the 'Abteilung Frauen' to support and use new research, for example on women in leadership positions.

A primary concern of the department was the representation of women at the higher levels in the economic and political hierarchy. The 'Abteilung Frauen', in close conjunction with the DFD, aimed to increase SED membership of women, their involvement with the DFD itself and women's participation in other political institutions. In 1987, women in the GDR took 32.2% of parliamentary seats, compared to

6.3% in the UK and 15.4% in the FRG.[45] This high percentage was a remarkable achievement at the time. However, the real influence of women on political decisions was more limited than these figures suggest. The only female minister during the 1970s and 1980s was Margot Honecker, who operated in a traditionally female area of responsibility, namely education. No women acquired full membership of the Politburo in this period. Within the SED, female membership reached around 35% by the mid-1980s, a percentage never achieved with regard to the number of women in responsible party positions, except with regard to posts on the local level.[46] A study from October 1988, which had been initiated by Erich Honecker, found that the main reason for this lack of progress was of an 'ideological' nature, which turned out to be traditional stereotypes that opposed women in leading positions. It indicated that prejudices towards women still dominated society and the party: 'Ideological problems, particularly the long-established habits and traditions that shape the attitude towards women in leading positions, have increasingly become the main obstacle to further progress.'[47] Common arguments used against having women in leading positions were their allegedly weaker physical and psychological disposition, motherhood, and obligations towards the family. In the surveys on which this study was based, young women especially were described as an element of uncertainty and, thereby, too great a burden for any leadership team. The main problem was stated openly: 'Many leading officials just do not want women to take on responsible positions.'[48] This analysis was forwarded to all members and candidates of the Politburo and the heads of all departments within the ZK SED – the people, who were criticised in the study but who at the same time, were responsible for the making of policy.

Similar attitudes, however, were found in all sections of society. The AdK, for example, was dominated by male members throughout the 1970s and 1980s. In this period, the section for writers only ever had four female members compared to a maximum of thirty-seven male members. The sole new female member during the 1970s was Christa Wolf, who joined the section in 1974. It took another 12 years, until 1986, when two more woman writers, Irmtraud Morgner and Waldtraut Lewin, were offered memberships.[49] This gender bias was able to continue despite the rapid rise in women writers' literary importance.[50] In a state which in almost all areas had quotas to ensure the equal treatment of women, the AdK seemed behind the times. It also greatly favoured male writers and poets when awarding prizes, in spite of attempts by Christa Wolf to influence relevant decisions in favour of female

colleagues.[51] The issue of lacking female representation in the literary section came up only very few times in the two decades, twice introduced by Wieland Herzfelde. In 1978, he commented: 'It displeases me immensely that women hardly exist in our academy, even in our section.'[52] However, the members who were present at that meeting paid little attention to the complaint. The subject of female integration was not an issue that was discussed formally.

The 'Abteilung Frauen' never achieved its goal of gender equality in the highest echelons of the economic, cultural, and political sectors. For the period between 1980 and 1982, in the final analysis of a survey conducted with female academics, the department even noted a general decline in the number of women in leadership positions. Characteristically, this momentous discovery was rationalised by the department with a reference to job cuts at the middle level of the hierarchies, where women had had a comparatively good representation, especially within industry.[53] Women's reaction to the policies devised by the 'Abteilung Frauen' and to the pressures they were exposed to, was a retreat from career considerations in the interest of their families: 'Some comments by women made clear that they accept the lack of demand on them in the interest of their families and are satisfied.'[54] The women questioned were highly educated academics, some of whom both recognised and accepted that their career prospects were limited. Anger is reflected in the study, but the language used in this quotation highlights a strong feeling of resignation expressed throughout the survey. After they had been given the education and an expectation of equal treatment, their specific experience of gender relations proved disappointing although the regime continued to stress the importance of women's participation in the workforce.

In terms of policy, the integration of women into full-time employment dominated the agenda of the 'Abteilung Frauen' throughout the 1970s and 1980s although the full integration of women into the workforce was almost completed in the 1970s. After the late 1970s, the pattern of women's employment numbers did not change much and in 1989 about 91% of women aged 15–60 were in employment with only 27% working part-time (fewer than 40 hours per week).[55] Those percentages were remarkable compared to European and world standards at the time. Nevertheless, throughout the Honecker period the 'Abteilung Frauen' focused on the employment issue and fought an ongoing battle against part-time work.[56]

Inge Lange dealt with pleas for help on an individual level but her many speeches addressed to delegations from administrative and

economic bodies rarely resulted in positive change.[57] In 1974, she commented on the continuous application of traditional stereotypes in professional education: 'We have no intention to train male kindergarten teachers because women are psychologically and physically different from men.'[58] Thereby, she undermined much of the propaganda that had characterised the late 1960s and the early 1970s. Perhaps, she was reacting to new developments within feminist thinking but her statement also reflected the regime's patriarchal tendencies.[59] However, as will be seen in the following analysis, basic policy did not change much during the Honecker period and certainly not enough to deal effectively with women's problems. A draft paper of the 'Abteilung Frauen' drawn up in preparation for the IX Party Conference highlighted the priorities of political institutions responsible for the advancement of women. In this analysis of 13 November 1975, the department provided a report on the progress that had been achieved regarding the position of women in socialist society since 1971. It prioritised employment of women, professional qualification, and day care for children. The VIII Party Conference had focused on full-time employment of women as the most important task in hand. In order to encourage them into work, various measures intended to lighten the burden of women were introduced in the report, including more convenient shopping hours, availability of hot food in factories and schools and additional services such as dry-cleaning facilities. Only at the very end of the list were other issues mentioned, which seem more pertinent to the emancipation of women, including female membership in political parties and organisations, disparity in salaries, and joint responsibility of men and women for the family.[60]

The annual plans of the 'Abteilung Frauen' throughout the 1970s show no theoretical development in its approach to women's emancipation.[61] The available time was primarily spent on analysing incoming information and statistics, ordering new studies on gender equality, preparing meetings and conferences, and very practical attempts at solving concrete problems such as improving the availability of goods and products. The system suffered from both information overload and a wish to keep the system running smoothly, rather than conceptually improving it.[62]

Women were found in every bloc party and mass organisation, where they often experienced both preferential treatment in terms of social privileges and a subordinated position in terms of political influence. The one major institution, which was both specific to women and crucial for the implementation of the structure described above, was

the DFD. However, it was dominated by the 'Abteilung Frauen' and widely perceived as ineffective and lacking relevance for the women of the GDR. Many of its own members saw the DFD primarily as an instrument of propaganda for the SED with, at most, an advisory role in parliament and local councils.[63]

The DFD

The DFD had originally been founded as an all-German independent organisation based on anti-fascist women's committees in March 1947. The mass organisation's primary aims were to raise women's political consciousness, bring about their ideological re-education and their mobilisation for paid labour. Especially in the early years, the DFD was responsible for initiating progressive legislation on behalf of women. The Law for the Protection of Mother and Child of 1950 was an outstanding example for the DFD's early success and progressive attitude. However, this was soon lost in the rigidity of the political system implemented by the SED. After the election of Ilse Thiele as president of the DFD in the mid-1950s, the organisation was effectively contained.[64] However, during the central congresses of the DFD members were able still to state general political concerns and to criticise central policies. In 1964 and 1969, they became platforms for critical opinions on issues such as women in technical professions and women's position within the economic and political hierarchies to such an extent that at future congresses, members were prevented from initiating such open and spontaneous discussions.[65] The differences between the period up to the mid-1970s and afterwards, when the DFD had achieved its basic aims and became increasingly stagnant with an aged leadership, were noticeable.

At its 10th central congress in February 1975, the DFD passed a declaration, which proclaimed the unconditional recognition of the SED. Such formal gestures of subordination had become standard procedure for East German mass organisations and bloc parties by that time. In fact, this formal submission to the SED came comparatively late. In 1988 only 24% of DFD members were also members of the SED and 72.3% of DFD members had no party affiliations.[66] While this made the clause of subordination to the SED even more inappropriate, it also indicated greater independence among DFD members, though not among those at the top of its administrative hierarchy, than generally assumed. Members of the SED were massively over represented in the leading committees of the DFD, reaching a representation of up to 50% on

a regular basis.[67] This was achieved although the DFD followed a quota system, whereby SED membership of those elected into executive committees was given a quota of 40% in 1982, already over double of their representation within the general membership in that year.[68] Generally, functionaries were re-elected over many years, which added to the inflexibility of the leadership and broadened the gap between grassroots and hierarchy.[69]

The organisation's membership rose continually and reached 1.5 million members in 1987. This represented about one-fifth of the female population aged over 25 years. However, while the DFD was successfully recruiting the older generations of women, it lacked young members. By 1988, only 25% of DFD members were under 35 years old and 46% were over 50. Ilse Thiele, after nearly four decades at the head of the DFD, was 69 in 1989.[70] In the 1970s and 1980s, the percentage of members who were housewives dropped from about 25% to under 20%, a percentage reflected directly in the number of those elected into the various executive committees of the DFD.[71] Housewives were, with over 40%, greatly over represented in the seminars organised by the DFD.[72] Availability of spare time might also have played a part in the composition of the DFD's membership.

In 1983, the DFD was criticised by the ZK SED for the apparent discrepancies between the activities of the general membership and the hierarchy, stating: 'one notes a falling back regarding the integration of members in the work of the organisation'.[73] In the previous year, membership had increased by only 4671, the lowest increase since 1974. The DFD reacted by concentrating on the recruitment of new members. Internally, Thiele criticised the high number of members lost to the DFD as women either left the organisation or were excluded: '120 exclusions (in Rostock alone 23), 3250 deletions, 1414 resignations are too many, whereby the number of those is growing, who refuse to engage in a discussion about their decisions.'[74] Rather than improving communications between the various layers of members and taking account of the grassroots, statistics became all-important. The Politburo not only accepted but also encouraged this approach based on meaningless numbers. When in 1983 the DFD was criticised by the Secretariat of the ZK SED for not including enough members in its activities, the executive board started a massive initiative to get more members to attend the annual meetings.[75] The direction or quality of the work done by the DFD, however, was not altered or even questioned.

The DFD occupied thirty-two seats in parliament, about 6.4% of the total seats and 20% of the seats held by women. The statistics, both for

membership and representation in parliament, suggest that the DFD had some impact on women's lives, possibly even on policy-making with regard to women's issues. In the 1970s and 1980s, the DFD concentrated its work primarily on the economic and social sectors with special attention given to the provision of childcare. One specific component of its work was the information centres introduced in the early 1970s. The centres were meant to provide various information, for example on sports and efficiency in the household, and also collect information from women on the availability of food and household products, children's clothing, and similar goods. That information was then forwarded to local state authorities to force them to improve the situation.[76] A focus of the DFD was the ideological education of women, and in particular reaching women within the Christian community and those working outside the thoroughly structured state sector. However, these efforts were marked by the DFD's attempts to dominate rather than integrate outsiders. Christian women tended to avoid the political discussions that were encouraged within the organisation, possibly because detailed reports of opinions that had been expressed were forwarded to superior political institutions, particularly the 'Abteilung Frauen' of the ZK SED and the 'Staatssekretär für Kirchenfragen'.[77] Anne Hampele has suggested that the DFD at one stage was even trying to prevent the establishment of women's groups under the protection of the Churches.[78] Although the DFD paid special attention to outsiders and tried to maintain communication, it did so in order to control – an attitude that alienated many women and encouraged them to look for alternatives.

Under Honecker, the organisation took on an educational role that was intended to mobilise women within the state sector but also aimed to ease the daily chores of women with a full-time job and a family.[79] Annual programmes of the DFD groups and committees concentrated primarily on this latter task, according to a report from 1979, in which statements similar to the following were repeatedly underlined: 'They are meant in particular to ease the life of working mothers even further.'[80] Furthermore, Rita Pawlowski, a former functionary of the DFD, has pointed out the differences between central and local activities. In her experience, local DFD organisations were able and willing to circumvent orders handed down from the top although opposition to official policy was never accepted:

> Although this space was limited, at the local level not just a few women used it. However, the DFD refused to accept a questioning of the GDR system, even up to the exclusion of women. To oppose

official policy – even in the interest of women – was and continued to be unacceptable.[81]

Although historians regularly dismiss the DFD as a co-opted mass organisation without any relevance to the women whose opinions and wishes it should have represented, it also accommodated more independent activities that allowed women to apply their own interests. The wider impact of such activities were reflected in the events of November 1989, when its long-standing president Ilse Thiele was forced to resign by members, who had been criticising the attitude of the leadership in letters for months, and the statutes were revised.[82]

The long-term impact of indoctrination and the rigid institutional structures that surrounded women with an attitude of patronising protectiveness combined to develop an ambivalent image of femininity that had a lasting effect on women's behaviour.[83] Various statistics suggest that women felt a greater loyalty towards the regime than did men and this loyalty was engendered by the perceived equality that existed in theory rather than fact, and also by an appreciation of the social security provided by the state.[84] This feeling was reflected in levels of participation. The involvement of women in organisations such as the FDJ, for example, was remarkably high and constant. Young women and girls showed their greatest initiative at the local level, where 335,000 of roughly 643,000 functionaries were female in 1988.[85] The expectation of equal treatment that had been promised sufficed, even in the face of an adverse reality, for women to feel both valued and worthy.[86] Their emancipation was based on an assumption of gender equality that the responsible institutions had encouraged although they were neither able nor entirely willing to realise it.

The situation of writers in the GDR was similar in this respect. Although established writers did not require the state to bolster their self-confidence, relevant institutions and high-ranking functionaries combined to assure writers of their political value within the socialist system. Both the attention and the privileges accorded them helped to inspire critical loyalty whilst enabling the regime to control the written word. The limitations of the political system accommodated those who were critical of the dictatorship without, for whatever reasons, being capable of leaving.

Controlling the written word

The 'Abteilung Kultur' of the ZK SED, the MfK, and the 'Hauptverwaltung Verlage und Buchhandel' (HV Verlage und Buchhandel)

represented the regime's authority within the cultural sector. The 'Abteilung Kultur' in particular, under the leadership of Peter Heldt (1973–76) and later Ursula Ragwitz, occupied a central position, which included responsibility for initiating and implementing policy.[87] The department controlled the AdK, the SV, and the East German branch of the PEN – the three main organisations for writers.[88] Finally, the department dealt with requests and petitions from individual writers, a task that ranged from providing cars and travel permissions to controlling dissident activity.[89] Similar to the other departments of the ZK, the 'Abteilung Kultur' effectively controlled its political sphere. However, in many instances influential functionaries such as Kurt Hager, Ursula Ragwitz, Hans-Joachim Hoffmann, and Klaus Höpcke directly negotiated the relationship between writers and the regime.[90] Erich Honecker himself cultivated eminent writers and often had the final word on policy or individual solutions. In the following section, the associations between political functionaries and writers will be looked at in more detail in order to highlight this particular characteristic of the cultural sphere, which allowed individuals to negotiate policy.

Even established writers had little direct political influence except for those, who had personal connections to the party leadership. Hermann Kant, president of the SV from 1978 onwards, developed a good rapport with Erich Honecker, which he used to address problems in relation to the SV.[91] Outstanding writers such as Stephan Hermlin and Christa Wolf used their access to the power centre for both personal requests and petitions on behalf of others who were less privileged, although the regime was often able to deliver favours on its own terms.[92] In August 1977, Christa Wolf asked Erich Honecker for the release of those who had been imprisoned because of activities relating to the Biermann affair. Writing to Franz Fühmann two weeks later she described the results of the conversation: 'The latter [release of the people in question] he promised. It has happened: Free in the West. The conversation was long and intensive, I said what there was to say, without concessions, and I was listened to. His suggestion was: to write and to survive.'[93] Her request had been granted but not in a way she had expected. Although she was given the privilege of stating her concerns, the solution suited only the regime. Furthermore, Honecker advised her to work through this difficult situation by writing. By stressing his understanding of her difficult situation and accepting her concerns, he stressed his interest in her views. However, the advice given highlighted his condescending attitude. Wolf's and other writers' only alternatives to 'writing and surviving' were opposition or emigration. Many chose those ways in the late 1970s and early 1980s but even more followed Honecker's recommendation.

Less distinguished functionaries were more reluctant to provide this kind of concerned relationship. In a letter to the MfK written in 1984, the pianist Annerose Schmidt complained of the general suspicion among lower ranking functionaries regarding the cultural elite:

> The distrust felt by many functionaries towards critical spirits, their intolerance and arrogance towards real experts, their peremptory tone, which begins already in the tiniest of police stations […] I speak from experience and not to curry favour, when I exempt from this the really highly placed and significant functionaries; they show most trust but apparently are unable to encourage a similar attitude among their subordinates.[94]

Although the statement sounds slightly haughty in its criticism of lowly functionaries, it stresses the necessity to differentiate. Writers who moved at the top of the political pyramid experienced power differently to those at the bottom of the literary hierarchy. The importance of the individual in this sector was more pronounced than in other political spheres. Writers, political functionaries, and the working structure of their respective hierarchies suited each other well in this respect.

Kurt Hager was probably the most prestigious individual within the state's cultural sector. His academic background, which included a professorship in philosophy at the Humboldt University in Berlin after the war, made him both chief ideologist and an acceptable partner for the intelligentsia, which often felt mistreated by functionaries of a lesser educational background. He was a full member of the Politburo from 1963 onwards and filled the post of secretary for science and culture within the ZK of the SED from 1955 to 1989. He also worked closely together with Ursula Ragwitz and was extremely influential in his area of responsibility, although Kant criticised Hager's dependency on Erich Honecker.[95] Kant also pointed out Hager's tendency to accept activities of functionaries at the district level that deviated from central policy, which led to a variety of cultural concepts: '[Hager] looked on as in every district the highest functionaries cultivated their own cultural policies and avoided disputes with the powerful as long as possible.'[96] Apparently, within the cultural sector, differentiation was not an unheard of quality although Kant, apparently, did not approve of this leadership style. Hager's central position was elaborated by his disposition towards personal intervention, particularly regarding censorship even concerning perhaps just one particular poem or book.[97] He had considerable influence on the cultural sector, more so when the power

of the MfK began to decline in the late 1970s, and also on education, health, science, and youth issues.[98] Hager was the person most authors would consult first when dealing with state authorities although, in fact, the 'Abteilung Kultur' made most decisions.

Hermann Kant played a crucial but extremely controversial role in this bargaining situation. He occupied a powerful position, was keen to establish close links to the political leadership, and in many cases appeared to be the state's puppet. Numerous occasions during the 1970s showed both the pressure which the state tried to apply to the SV and the willingness of Kant to comply with these attempts. Even in the early 1970s, the state was planning to promote Kant to the position of president. In 1974, Hager himself actively prevented Kant from becoming the successor of Konrad Wolf as the president of the AdK in order to ensure his availability for the more influential position as the head of the SV.[99] The state needed Kant in control of the SV. In April 1978, Honecker met with the leading members of the SV to direct the preparations for the VIII Writers' Congress. He strongly suggested that writers should present conformist views and, in fact, demanded that only people with the appropriate political attitude should be invited to the congress: 'The functionaries of the SV need to insist that no delegates are elected for participation in the congress, who have been inactive within the SV or who, in political–ideological terms, have stood against the development of our society.'[100] Direct pressure was applied to the leading members of the SV. In addition, Kant submitted the manuscripts for the speeches to Hager for correction. This first congress of the SV after the upheavals of 1976 was of enormous political importance to the state but also crucial to the future of the SV and took place in an atmosphere that was still highly charged. Nevertheless, Kant accommodated direct state intervention. On 25 May 1978, after two meetings with Kant, Hager sent a copy of the text to Konrad Naumann, 1st secretary of the SED district organisation in Berlin, describing it as follows: 'This is the version, which Kant provided after two discussions with me and which, in my opinion, can be accepted.'[101] The balance of power between Kant and Hager could not be expressed more clearly. Kant, however, described the congresses of the SV as relatively open spaces unconstrained by censorship in a country where freedom of expression was not a right available to everybody.[102] In his opinion, he was doing whatever was necessary to both appease the state and protect some limited privileges for the writers organised in the SV. For Kant, open opposition was neither the way to deal with a dictatorship nor to establish an effective opposition, as he stated in 1991: 'Of course you can have a big

performance showing strong opposition, from then on, however, you will have no opportunities anymore to continue a productive opposition.'[103] How constructive Kant's kind of opposition was, is difficult to assess. Whilst the conviction that one has to work within the system, even in partial compliance with the requirements of a dictatorial regime, was quite typical of the majority of GDR intellectuals, it is difficult to pinpoint any real results of this tactic other than securing the position and privileges of individuals.[104] Only writers registered by the SV would qualify for the social benefits, only politically suitable projects or people would enjoy the additional money for cultural projects, and only those deemed politically loyal would be allowed access to the political leadership.

However, the SV was a crucial institution that accommodated negotiations with the regime. In 1987, it comprised 834 members. The SV statute of 1973 stressed the leadership role of the SED regarding cultural policy:

> The members of the SV of the GDR accept the leading role of the working class and its party in cultural policy. They declare their belief in the creative method of socialist realism. They energetically oppose all forms of ideological coexistence and the penetration of reactionary and revisionist attitudes in the literary sector.[105]

Thereby, the SED not only demanded loyalty but also specified the literary style that writers were to apply to their work. This was a difficult demand to implement thoroughly. Socialist realism is a concept that was both simplified and stretched in the GDR. Functionaries tended to simplify, as Erwin Strittmatter pointed out during a discussion within the AdK, and expected hero figures to be working class whereas writers aimed to develop the concept in their work. Furthermore, mass culture was not necessarily interested in political education but looked towards 'simple' literature. This attitude was not easily combined with the socialist standards of cultural policy.[106] Institutions such as the SV and the AdK were responsible for accommodating both writers' needs and the party line.

The branches of the AdK, especially those in Berlin and Dresden, constituted centres of learning and cultural development. The academy's magazine *Sinn und Form*, published from 1950 onwards, provided some space for the publication of controversial texts but only if the editor decided to support this in the face of political pressure.[107] Membership of the prestigious AdK conferred many privileges but not necessarily

political power. When members of the AdK's literary section, after discussing the literary education of young people, attempted actively to improve the situation, their efforts proved futile.[108] In fact, members only fully realised in the middle of the 1970s, when changes to the constituting statute were discussed, that the academy was legally subordinated to the state.[109] This incidental note regarding the AdK's relationship with the regime raises wider questions in relation to the style of leadership the SED employed within the cultural sector. That most of those linked to the Prenzlauer Berg scene worked apart from both the SV and the AdK gives an indication of how much these two institutions were associated with the government and the SED.[110] Furthermore, the SED managed repeatedly to force the AdK into accepting functionaries in exchange for being allowed to elect more critical writers.[111] This exchange of favours, if one can call it that, highlighted both the comparatively strong position of the literary elite and the regime's willingness to negotiate in the interest of stability.

Directly linked to the party institutions was the MfK, headed in the early 1970s by Klaus Gysi who, in 1973, was followed by Hans-Joachim Hoffmann. The ministry was responsible for implementing the general policies devised by the ZK's cultural department. Besides its coordinating role, the ministry had some influence on authors through various sponsorship schemes. Many authors and artists received financial support in the form of prizes for cultural achievement that were presented by the ministry. Stephan Krawczyk, who later became an outspoken critic of the regime and was forced to leave the GDR in 1988, received one such prize in a song competition in 1981. Furthermore, the ministry's literary institute in Leipzig offered young writers the chance to acquire a professional qualification whilst studying Marxist–Leninist ideology, literary theory, and history. Such eminent writers as Sarah Kirsch, Erich Loest and, in a later generation, Uwe Kolbe studied at the institute. During the 1970s, it was still a place where talent rather than the appropriate political attitude was fostered. In the early 1980s fundamental changes were introduced. As a result of discussions with young writers and poets published in the *Weimarer Beiträge* in 1979, the institute in Leipzig was forced to prioritise political attitude over talent regarding both the selection and education of its students.[112] Throughout the early 1980s, the MfS criticised the selection process and criteria applied by the institute.[113] By 1983 its educational aim had become primarily political.[114] The MfK was not a dominant institution and in most cases, Hoffmann referred to Hager on difficult political issues.[115] However, Hoffmann was often the functionary sent to the SV

or the AdK to explain the regime's position on specific issues but without the power to negotiate.[116]

One further institution, the East German branch of the PEN, was of importance to writers. It occupied an ambiguous position in the GDR. As branch of an international organisation and with the power to elect its members, it had some autonomy, more so than the SV and the AdK. The PEN Charter's emphasis on freedom of expression and internationalism should have put it on a collision course with the cultural policies of the SED but Emmerich insisted that the East German PEN did not play a major role within the GDR and existed primarily as an institutional showpiece.[117] Documents from the 'Abteilung Kultur' show that Ragwitz directly influenced the election of members to the PEN centre and decided on its international activities.[118] The 'Abteilung Kultur' of the ZK SED planned direct intervention and possibly the forced exclusion of Stephan Hermlin, if he tried to use the PEN as a political platform:

> Should the conflict with him [Hermlin] increase within the PEN, then the dispute with Hermlin needs to be continued there and his exclusion from the committee of the PEN centre of the GDR must be started, or he should not be nominated again for election.[119]

Furthermore, the regime paid the Secretary General of the PEN centre in the GDR, Henryk Keisch from 1974 to 1985, 1300 Marks monthly.[120] In 1989, the president of the PEN, Heinz Kamnitzer, gave some indication of his allegiance when describing the protests of the population as 'blasphemy'.[121] Nevertheless, the PEN was relevant to writers in the GDR, who in some instances were able to deflect SED policy. The election of Biermann into the PEN centre had been such an occasion although his membership did not protect him from the MfS or, in 1976, from expatriation.[122] The PEN centre in the GDR accommodated discussions and international relations, although it was in no position to oppose the regime.

Various mass organisations and bloc-parties added to the institutions that writers had to contend with. Linked to the 'Kulturbund' were both the publishing house Aufbau Verlag and the magazine *Aufbau*. The Aufbau Verlag published one of the most important literary serials in the GDR, the *Weimarer Beiträge* a forum for a variety of writers including the little published younger generation.[123] Furthermore, the 'Kulturbund' occupied twenty-two seats in parliament. The FDJ was also in a perfect position to control young writers. In October 1982, the FDJ organised

a cultural conference at which FDJ functionaries denounced writers who were travelling to West Germany on a regular basis.[124] In addition, the bloc-parties had publishing houses linked to them. Thereby such important publishers as the Dietz Verlag (SED), Verlag Tribüne (FDGB), and Neues Leben (FDJ) acted as transmission belts and control agencies for cultural and political policies. Censorship in particular was based on the compliance of these publishing houses.

The work of censorship institutions

Censorship, for a long time, was a taboo subject in the GDR. Even after 1989, Honecker insisted that there had been no censors in his country, at least not within an institutional setting.[125] In reality, various agencies kept a tight grip on what was published. Crucial in this context was the HV Verlage und Buchhandel, founded in the mid-1950s as part of the MfK, which administered the 'Druckgenehmigungsverfahren'. It forced publishing houses, before they were allowed to print any book, to apply for an official permit. The decision on submitted books depended on individuals, mainly on party functionaries who might have taken a dislike, or liking, to a particular work but also on the year of its submission. Christine Horn, a specialist on GDR literature, who was employed in the institute from 1965 to 1990, pointed out that during the 1980s anything to touch upon GDR history or GDR reality, specifically in relation to the Berlin Wall, the army, the environment, global problems, the history of the working class, and depictions of other countries, would have been looked at with suspicion.

The question of responsibility in this sector seems difficult. From 1973 onwards, Klaus Höpcke was in charge of the HV Verlage und Buchhandel, which accounts for his title of 'Chief-Censor'. Christine Horn, however, expressed her opposition to such judgement. She focused attention on the role of the powerful party functionary:

> I myself have seen how Herr Höpcke came from the cultural department of the ZK entirely despondent and angry, with the information that Herr Hager had rejected yet another publication proposal. And that did not happen just once. Therefore, the term 'Chief-Censor' should rightly be applied to somebody else.[126]

This statement has to be considered with caution as it protects a former colleague and superior. Nevertheless, this self-understanding of an institution meant to uphold the state's ideology, is revealing in its focus

on the insistent theme of good intentions.[127] The conviction that it was possible to do good by simply having good intentions was common among those involved with or working for government or party institutions during the 1970s and 1980s. Many readers at the various publishing houses were convinced that they were protecting their specific authors when they demanded cuts or the re-writing of a text. They felt that they were struggling against the enemy one step up the hierarchical ladder and did not feel directly responsible for the perpetuation of a system they did not entirely approve of but accepted as a given.[128] This attitude represented one of the aspects which allowed the system to continue for its last two decades of life without much change.

Furthermore, Karen Leeder has pointed out that an unofficial publishing scene existed, especially from the late 1970s onwards, which provided additional space for writers, although such publications were limited in the number of copies and only reached a specific audience. The boundary between official and unofficial publication in the GDR was by no means watertight and overlapped in many instances with, as an outstanding example, Uwe Kolbe writing for both sides.[129] The East German literary sphere was not fully contained within the official institutions. Although working in the GDR involved dealing with many challenges that were caused by political limitations, writers were often able to use these challenges in a positive way. It is important to remember that they had two crucial roles to play within the political system, both of which offered them at least some protection and many privileges – that of the educator and, especially in the later years, that of an ambassador for the GDR.

State institutions shared a number of common characteristics. First, in terms of the institutional structure, they worked in very similar ways. All three groups were centrally organised, directed, and controlled. Furthermore, a distinct hierarchy developed, which was dominated by individuals. Furthermore, an overlap in personnel was apparent. Kurt Hager has been mentioned already but Egon Krenz, for example, occupied the posts of first secretary of the central board of the SED and member in both the ZK and the Politburo with special responsibility for security, youth, and sports. Indirectly at least, Krenz would also have had a say on cultural policy aimed at young people and social policy regarding young women. This overlap of SED membership, government posts and, often, positions within appropriate organisations constituted and highlighted a basic principle of what Alf Lüdtke called the 'durchherrschte Gesellschaft'. It enabled the SED to influence and control most areas of society. However, the political system was less than perfect

and its shortcomings encouraged specific sections of society to create alternative structures, often with the help of the Protestant Churches. Especially during the late 1970s and the 1980s, the population of the GDR became increasingly adept at living its life at least partly beyond the official agencies. This behaviour did not necessarily reflect opposition to the state. Rather, as institutions began to show signs of stagnation they became increasingly meaningless and useless as tools of communication with the state. At least one major aim of the peace and environmental groups of the early 1980s was to express an opinion and to establish a dialogue with the government and the SED. Dissatisfaction was caused primarily by the shortcomings of the institutions and not by their existence and work as such.

The one exception from the general pattern, the Churches, offered alternative institutions, which remained the only one still open to dialogue and in constant communication with the state. Its dual role as safety valve and base for unofficial movements caused but also softened many problems for the state. However, the very existence of this outsider institution, a unique situation within the Eastern Bloc, helped to highlight the deficiency of the state's own institutional system.

Dealing with an outsider – the Churches

The outsider position occupied by the Churches had strong ramifications for their position within the GDR. Direct control was not possible for the regime because of the Churches' independent status and separate institutions. Nevertheless, the regime created a network of interacting departments and organisations that accommodated political and social relations with the Christian population and the Church hierarchies. In spite of political inconsistencies that were caused by overlapping responsibilities and local differentiations, the relationship was increasingly formalised under Honecker as institutions became more aware of the regime's need for cooperation rather than confrontation.

Primary contact person for representatives of the Churches was the 'Staatssekretär für Kirchenfragen', a post held in succession by Hans Seigewasser (1960–79), Klaus Gysi (1979–88), and Kurt Löffler (1988/89). The state secretary worked without portfolio and ranked at the bottom of the council of ministers' hierarchy, an indication of the low priority given to Church policy. In 1986, when asked for the reasons for accepting the post of state secretary, Gysi recalled his doubtful reaction to Honecker's offer to which he had responded by asking: 'What that nonsense was all about, after all there can't really be so many religious

people living in the GDR?'[130] By 1985, however, Gysi had come to appreciate the importance of Church–state relations, and thereby of his own political role. He asked Honecker to raise his status:

> During the last years, many developments in the work of the Churches have taken place within and outside the GDR, which brought about a new status and, at the same time, demand some changes and expansion in working methods and structures.[131]

One particular reason Gysi cited for his demand was the state secretary's low level of influence at the local and district level.[132] Variations in the application of central policy had a direct impact on local Church–state relations. It also made the success of cooperation more dependent on individuals and their ability, or willingness, to relate to each other's political, social, and cultural concerns.

Within the political system, the Politburo and the ZK SED had the final say on Church policy. Although they were responsible for the development of policies, these did not always originate from within them. Most importantly, the Politburo resolved policy differences that occurred not only in central party or government institutions but also on the local level.[133] In the period from 1959 to 1984, the Politburo's second man, Paul Verner was specifically responsible for Church affairs. Significantly, during the 1970s and early 1980s he also assumed some responsibility for security issues as ZK secretary. His attitude to the Churches was marked by a conviction that religion would eventually disappear but in the meantime would have to be accommodated.[134] Crucially for his style of politics, Verner had a very good rapport with Bishop Schönherr, the chairman of the KKL from 1969 to 1981. Both men's interest in improved communications helped the progress in Church–state relations during the 1970s. After his resignation for health reasons in 1984, and following a short interregnum during which Erich Honecker himself dealt with Church issues, Verner was succeeded by Werner Jarowinsky who had much less influence within the Politburo and little experience with Church issues except for his involvement in the preparation of the Luther anniversary in 1983. His lack of experience in this sector, of personal relations to representatives of the Churches and, crucially, of political influence put a noticeable strain on Church–state relations during these politically tense years.

The 'Arbeitsgruppe Kirchenfragen' within the ZK SED prepared decisions on Church politics for the Politburo and advised the 'Staatssekretär für Kirchenfragen'.[135] The long-standing communist and

hardliner Willi Barth chaired the department from 1957 to 1976, followed by Rudi Bellmann, who remained in charge until 1988. Church policy was devised and implemented by a combination of political agencies. The 'Staatssekretär für Kirchenfragen' worked together with both the 'Arbeitsgruppe Kirchenfragen' in the ZK SED and the MfS. The 'Arbeitsgruppe Kirchenfragen', however, was the central policy maker.[136] The collaboration between the state secretary and the MfS was undermined by their fundamentally different attitudes towards Church–state relations. Whilst the MfS tended towards aggressive control, the office of the state secretary was more concerned with building up a working relationship, although both institutions ensured a constant exchange of information. In all instances, Erich Honecker was informed of developments and had the final say on policy.[137]

Additional state influences were represented by various ministries, for example the MfK, which dealt with Church publications and the Ministries of Education, which were responsible for a wide range of issues such as theology degrees at universities and the treatment of young Christians within the school system. The regime was hoping to integrate Christians into society, encourage their participation in the regime, and eventually subordinate their specific world view to the dominant ideology. To translate policy into actions, the state used relevant organisations such as the CDU and the FDJ to reach the Christian community more effectively.

The CDU

The CDU acted, like many other bloc parties and mass organisations, as a transmission belt which communicated with specific sections of the population, in this case Christians, to ensure their political, social, and cultural participation. During the early 1950s, the CDU aligned itself with the SED by, first, rejecting Christian socialism at its Meissen Congress in 1951 and, second, by agreeing to the SED's drive for the construction of socialism in 1952. From that time onwards, the CDU is generally seen to have ceased to act as an autonomous party.[138] Nevertheless, the CDU had some impact at least on Church–state relations, most markedly so from 1949 to 1957, when Otto Nuschke acted as chairman of the party and also as the deputy for the Minister President Otto Grotewohl. Furthermore, the party attracted a membership of 132,000 in the late 1980s, of which about 200 were clergy, and was allocated fifty-two seats in parliament, representing 10.4% of the votes. In specific areas such as education and culture, it had some

input on central policy.[139] In particular with regard to the new Youth Law of 1974, the HV CDU was credited with ensuring the deletion of the controversial formulation: 'that every student should be an agitator for Marxism–Leninism'.[140] This change reflected the demands of the BEK directly.[141] Furthermore, the CDU was important as mediator and educator within the theological departments of the universities, at least until 1971, when the structural basis of these departments was changed. In 1972, Jürgen Janott, adviser within the MFH, reinforced the government's rejection of CDU intervention: 'It was not the task of the CDU to practice an educational role towards students of theology. This was the responsibility of the Ministry for Further Education.'[142] From this time onwards, direct contact between the CDU and students only took place if lecturers were members of the bloc party. Surveys and studies that were prepared by the CDU on a regular basis underpinned wider SED analyses. The CDU also had its own publishing house, the Union Verlag, which it used to focus on issues relevant to Christian life in the GDR.[143] In general terms, CDU functionaries on the local level were sometimes able to affect central policy and in spite of the fact that the CDU worked closely together with the SED, it constituted an institution that provided political space for a specific section of the Christian community.[144] Already in 1973, the SED heavily criticised the CDU for putting too little effort into political work among its Christian members. Local branches of the party especially were neglecting their responsibility to clarify fundamental political questions posed by the XIII Party Conference of the CDU. In 1973, the CDU leadership restated the main task of the party with regard to the Christian community. It put special stress on the need for both integration and subordination: 'The reinforcement of the understanding that only socialism was in a position to offer Christians the opportunity to realise in the social sector the consequences of Christian ethics.'[145] However, just as the Churches criticised the work of the CDU for not sufficiently supporting the Christian community, in 1986 the state secretary Gysi admonished the CDU for siding with and representing the wishes of the Churches.[146]

In the early 1980s, state departments tried to encourage cooperation of Christian and non-Christian. The 'Abteilung Kirchenfragen' of the CDU reported that, in legal terms, the equal treatment of Christians was ensured. In reality, however, many discriminatory practices dominated the relationship. Relations between FDJ and CDU, for example, were limited to the election of a small number of CDU members into some of the leading bodies of the youth organisation. The 'Abteilung

Kirchenfragen' of the CDU pointed out these problems in 1982:

> The statement, which was part of the statute, whereby the FDJ works together with parties and mass organisations organised in the N[ational] F[ront] of the GDR and contributes to the consolidation of this union is, in practice, limited to the inclusion of some CDU members in committees.[147]

In the same report, however, the department made practical suggestions how to improve the situation. These proposals included the use of propaganda, more educational work concentrating on enabling young people to differentiate and talks between the FDJ, the CDU, the ZK SED, and the 'Staatssekretär für Kirchenfragen'.[148]

Similarly, in 1983, an official report stated the FDJ's responsibilities regarding young Christians, after a group of Christians had complained about not being allowed to participate in one of the marches organised by the FDJ. One measure taken was the introduction of regular talks between the FDJ and young Christians to give the latter a better opportunity to partake in the preparation of political events.[149] Nevertheless, the concessions and compromises indicated above were not designed to allow young Christians to apply their initiatives to the FDJ.[150]

Some further organisations attempted to reach Christians and, in particular clergy on a broader, non-partisan basis. The Christian Circles, for example, were working groups at local, district and national levels. They achieved a 20–30% participation of the total Protestant clergy. Furthermore, the 'Pfarrerbund' was created in 1958 following directions from the SED with the aim to mobilise pro-regime pastors and, thereby, to put pressure on the Church leadership. This organisation had about one hundred members but was officially dissolved in 1974 and only a rump organisation remained active. Although the Churches themselves were refused any political involvement, their members were encouraged by the state to participate in its institutions. One MfS report from May 1987 called this approach, which hoped to assimilate Christians into socialist society, 'A share of responsibility without any special rights'.[151] Participation within society was a major issue for the regime as it ensured both control and stability. The CDU, FDJ, and other organisations facilitated this concern. However, the consequence of either becoming a member in the CDU or refusing to be part of the FDJ could be discrimination.[152] The Churches' unique outsider position caused the government to take special measures regarding their institutional integration as it tried to differentiate between friend and enemy. The regime was not

able to directly involve itself in Church structures and decision processes but it tried to do so through indirect channels. Whilst the state's treatment of the Churches and of the Christian community varied over time, the level of attention accorded to the dangers posed by this alternative organisation never lapsed.

An alternative institution

The existence of an institutional structure relatively independent from the centralised state undermined the regime. The state tried very hard to control the Churches which, by their continued existence, challenged basic Marxist–Leninist doctrines. In the GDR, the majority of Christians were Protestants and there existed a distinct minority of Catholics and some other small denominations. As early as June 1949, the Catholic Church had encountered problems with the SED when the Pope declared that no believer should support a communist party. Over two decades later, the Vatican appointed the first administrators for the GDR. In 1976, the Pope decided that the Catholic Church in the GDR required an executive body independent from the West German Church and installed the 'Berliner Bischofskonferenz'. Despite tensions, the Catholic Church within the GDR stayed in a state of hibernation for most of the time, a decision that suited both sides.[153] Only in the late 1980s did it begin to make contact with and follow the lead of the Protestant Church, specifically in terms of working with young people. Generally, however, the Catholic Church did not have much impact on the developments within society beyond its own membership.

In contrast, the Protestant Churches tended to occupy much more of the centre stage. There existed eight regional Churches three of which were purely Lutheran while the others were merged Lutheran and Reformed Churches. Up to 1969, they were represented by the all-German 'Evangelische Kirche Deutschlands' (EKD) and after that the East German BEK. As already mentioned, Bishop Albrecht Schönherr was chairman of the KKL until 1981, followed by Bishop Werner Krusche 1981–82, Bishop Johannes Hempel 1982–86, and finally Bishop Werner Leich. All of these bishops shared the conviction that the Churches' future laid in limited cooperation with the state. The internal structure of the BEK combined both hierarchical and democratic principles. The democratic aspect was based on the synods, which were elected by a process beginning in local parish councils. The synod would choose the bishop, or Church president, along with the Church leadership. Both played an executive role especially within the full-time

bureaucracy of the chancellery of each regional Church. In terms of its political importance, the regional synod was crucial as it was responsible for the affairs of the regional Churches and was able to discuss and agree on policies. Furthermore, the regional synod was allowed to make proclamations. The synods of the laity, by contrast were influential in the areas of justice and socio-ethical issues.[154] In this context, the major problem but also advantage for the Churches proved the division between leadership and grassroots, which was increased by the state's preference for dealing with the leadership. However, during the 1980s, this split benefited the initiatives of individual pastors in support of the peace and environmental movement. The GDR government repeatedly criticised the Church leadership's inability to control activities that were taking place at the local level. In particular, controversial individuals such as Rainer Eppelmann troubled the state authorities. This independence constituted a major aspect of the Churches' institutional set-up, which helped to protect both their members and their independent status.[155]

Also crucial to the Churches' position were both the links to and the financial backing they received from the West German Churches. Regular cash injections enabled GDR Churches to maintain their social presence among the population, a major concern in the face of constantly declining membership rates. In the early 1980s there were 51 hospitals, 89 homes for disabled people, 226 nursing homes for the aged, 326 kindergartens, and other similar institutions, through which the Churches were able to reach many thousands of GDR citizens. Over 15,000 people were employed in the social services organised by the Churches. Furthermore, the Churches put great efforts into cultural life by organising concerts or through the work of educational institutions. The benefits derived from having access to the media should not be underestimated, especially as the media exposure of Churches in the GDR was much greater than in other communist bloc countries.[156] Altogether, the Protestant Churches in the GDR possessed a complex institutional network which continued to elude state attempts at control. Additionally, they touched the lives of many non-Christians, and acquired increasing political significance during the 1980s.

The existence of such an alternative prevented absolute state control and provided a degree of protection from the political demands of the regime. Furthermore, the exposure to more than one socialising force meant that Christians were less affected by the constant indoctrination than other sections of society. Non-Christians were attracted by the Churches' work with young people and the ideology-free space they

provided.[157] To these people the alternative world view of Christianity encouraged critical comparisons if nothing else.

Summary

The political system of the GDR posed many problems. It had been created as a means to direct society towards a socialist consciousness. It touched every aspect of life but focused specifically on groups which were deemed particularly important or dangerous to the socialist state. Accordingly, Christians, youth, and writers received much attention from the appropriate institutions and thus were exposed to a greater degree of control than the bigger category of women. Although it was possible to circumvent the rigid structure to some extent, especially at the local level where deviation from central policy was both possible and common, a person's life in the GDR was inevitably subject to the directions of various state institutions. The Churches, which remained sufficiently independent to offer some protection, provided the one exception.

The GDR society in the 1980s in particular was marked by a general acceptance of the given, little outright questioning and much grumbling. The regime discouraged anything else. With this background, the East German population relied on petitions and even, to some extent, the MfS as lines of communication. These, however, were prone to similar shortcomings. The Protestant Churches represented the only alternative system that was in a position to communicate with the state authorities on behalf of sections of the population that were otherwise isolated. However, to accept this role the Churches were forced to put at risk their relationship with the state authorities. They did so reluctantly.

The East German population's attitudes and behaviour patterns were deeply influenced by a combination of party and government agencies, but specific sections of society experienced their activities differently. They also reacted to their experiences in a variety of ways. Writers could feel inspired, women might have felt more loyal than men and some young people developed an aversion to politics whilst Christians perhaps felt threatened more than anything else. Whatever the reactions, they differed greatly and caused a great variety of behaviour patterns designed to deal with specific circumstances. Furthermore, the existence of political space made it possible for alternative structures and lifestyles to develop, partly in response to the rigidity of the institutions. Furthermore, political shortcomings had a positive effect on the development of subgroups. In the following chapters, the diversity within East German society will be looked at in depth in order to highlight both the participatory aspect of East German society and internal dynamics that circumvented the inflexible political system.

4
Diversity

In Chapters 2 and 3, the limitations of both central policy and the network of political institutions have been analysed. Those chapters explored the inability of the regime's political system to reach, control or shape society entirely. Chapter 4 will describe the socially and culturally diverse society that developed in reaction to a rigid but not all-pervasive system.[1] The political, social, and cultural spaces that arose from the inadequacies of the regime both encouraged and accommodated the development of alternative structures. Sections of the population reacted in different ways to the shortcomings of the regime, which they encountered in ways specific to their social and cultural environment. In addition, the regime relied greatly on the participation of society in order to function sufficiently to ensure political and economic stability.

From the outside, the GDR seemed a remarkably well-organised and efficient state, which, by the very nature of centralisation, prevented diversity within society. However, openings in the social and cultural sphere allowed great parts of the population to maintain and develop their individuality and their self-understanding. In some cases, this self-perception stood in opposition to official categories and, in others, it complemented them. Furthermore, differentiation within groups, manifested in the existence of subgroups and overlaps between groups, added to the complex pattern of society in the GDR. Diversity was the source of the interaction that shaped relations between the regime and society and compromises were a necessary part of this relationship. This mutual dependency stabilised the regime up to 1987. Building on the exploration in this chapter of both the differences in the self-understanding of social groups and the differentiation within groups, Chapter 5 will proceed to discuss the tensions between sections of

society. Thereby, Chapters 4 and 5 as a whole will emphasise the diversity of East German society and its repercussions on the relationship between the regime and specific social groups.

The differences in the self-understanding of social groups and the regime's misperception of them derived partly from the central system's inability to facilitate subcultures effectively. In addition, communication between the regime and sections of society was hindered by the use of different reference points. The SED's perception relied on ideological theory to determine and categorise roles within society. In contrast, social groups and especially subgroups used fashion, music, issues such as pacifism and environmentalism, cultural activities, alternative lifestyles, and social relations to express their perceptions of themselves. Misconceptions, particularly with regard to political roles, were unavoidable under these circumstances. They shaped cultural, social, and political interaction in the GDR.

Self-perception of the four groups

Society in the GDR was shaped by categories, which the regime applied as part of its centralised political system. The regime's attitude towards the groups strongly influenced their self-definition. In spite of fundamental differences: age and gender representing biological concepts, Christianity and the literary life based on acquired characteristics; the four groups mostly complied with the expectations of the regime as they were reacting to their surroundings. However, at the same time, the groups continued to harbour characteristics within their self-definition that reflected more traditional social forces. Social background, education, and access to political and economic privileges were still part of the self-definition process in spite of the regime's efforts to apply its own social scheme.

The issue of class was extremely important to the ideological justification of the political elite. Class divisions were predicted to disappear. However, by the 1970s statistics showed a development away from this prediction. The continued existence and apparent increase in inequality along traditional class lines represented a political problem for the regime and hiding it became a priority. During the 1950s and 1960s in particular great advances had been made in this respect with excellent opportunities for social climbers with a working-class background to attain positions of power. The beginnings of the 1970s, however, showed the first signs of stagnation and a reproduction of elites. Privileged parents ensured that their offspring would have access to

the necessary educational, political, and professional opportunities. University statistics, for example, show a steady increase in numbers of children from a background where at least one of the parents had a degree and a decline in those with a pure working-class background.[2]

However, a person's position in the East German society was not primarily determined by educational achievement. Aspects such as a privileged social background and political loyalty proved more important. Heike Solga has shown that throughout the existence of the GDR, in spite of the opportunities for the working class in the early years, people with a privileged social background generally had a better chance of achieving a measure of political, economic, and technocratic power and control over different forms of strategic resources. Solga's approach to the question of class within the GDR relies on criteria specific to the political and social structures of East German society, which was built on influence in political and economic areas and access to resources rather than on ownership of private property.[3] By concentrating on the importance of privileges, she avoids having to rely on the social categories used by the official GDR statistics, which provided only limited insight into the country's social structure. The exclusion from the Statistical Yearbook of the GDR of the category 'Intelligenz' (intelligentsia) meant that the artificial category 'Arbeiter und Angestellte' embraced 89.2% of the population in 1984. This suited the state's ideology but did not help the clarity of statistics.[4] Inconsistencies arose when young people with a working-class background entered university. In the late 1980s, 52% of all students had at least one parent with an academic education but were categorised as children of the working class. Such structural concessions made it difficult to fit the social system of the GDR within the classical Marxist framework. Only in the early 1980s did scientists attempt to interpret social differences as a necessary part of every society and basis for the modernisation process.[5] The change came at a time, when a numeric growth of the working class was not expected anymore.[6] The theoretical framework of the SED was falling apart rapidly. However, the new alignment of scientific findings on the problems and developments of class division did not have a fundamental impact on either social policy or political theory. The Politburo continued to apply old formulas and quick fix solutions without taking account of the available information. The continued existence of the class system, although with a shift in the primary characteristics, indicated that social forces were working within the GDR which the SED was unable to control entirely chiefly because the Politburo refused to deal with such conceptual problems.[7] By following Solga's approach, which views social differentiation

in relation to privileges, relative standing in relation to the political elite, and access to resources, social diversity and internal dynamics will be clarified further. In addition, gender stereotypes and generational conflict continued to shape social relations though the regime tried to dismiss these as capitalist phenomena without relevance to socialist society.

This mixture of old and new features combined to leave women, for example, with an expectation of equal treatment, but also a feeling of primary responsibility for both children and the home.[8] Levels of criticism, particularly in relation to traditional gender roles and their survival within senior management and the family, seems to have often depended on a woman's age and educational background.[9] Young people, as the other biological category, were similarly dependent on their social background for self-definition, at least until the regime's selection process in the shape of higher education and apprenticeships intervened to determine their future self-understanding.[10] At school, the self-definition of students was differentiated mostly by the political initiative of the individual, his or her intellectual achievement and, to some extent, religious affiliation. Differences between girls and boys became visible at an early stage, mostly regarding levels of intellectual achievement and political commitment.[11] In contrast to this almost communal atmosphere among the biologically determined groups, writers developed much more ambivalent self-definitions based on a strong individualism, which expressed itself primarily in their work but also in their relations to fellow writers. The Prenzlauer Berg scene, for example, provided a locality for individual artists rather than representing a collaborative project of a group of people.[12] Similarly, the SV and the AdK provided space for individuals to discuss issues of common concern rather than initiating a group dynamic. Common traits, however, were elite thinking even within more independent sections, an interest in progress, and a distinct political stance with regard to the regime. Depending on age and individual experiences, attitudes towards the political system ranged from nihilistic disdain at one extreme through a feeling of responsibility based on the anti-fascist myth, to absolute loyalty. The majority of women and young people had less defined opinions and tried to avoid direct encounters with the political system, a possibility that was often not available to writers. In contrast, Christians were forced to recognise themselves as political, social, and cultural outsiders and belonging to this group was a major point of reference for their self-definition.[13] Nevertheless, the Churches' activities and the information available to Christians also encouraged a type of

elite thinking. In particular the Churches' adoption of issues such as
environmentalism, pacifism, and the upbringing of young people makes
it possible to view them as an elite with specific, although limited, priv-
ileges while confirming their outsider position.[14] Within the Churches,
traditional gender roles tended to be more pronounced than in society
at large, although women's groups within the Protestant Churches
worked hard to improve this situation.[15] Although this rather sketchy
depiction of self-definition within the four groups needs further discus-
sion, general trends have been indicated. In all four groups, the aspects
age, gender, religious affiliation, and profession were crucial to both the
self-understanding and the social position of a person. Consequently,
diversity was facilitated mainly in the overlaps between the groups.
Both the perceptions of the self and the overlaps between groups will be
discussed in more detail in the following section in order to indicate the
existence of a differentiation within East German society which went
beyond the categorisation applied by the regime.

The female approach

Under Honecker, women's self-perception was marked by an independ-
ent, emancipated attitude which demanded equal treatment in the work
place and within the private sphere. Women dominated central organi-
sations that were designed specifically to cater for the female part of
the population, such as the 'Abteilung Frauen' and the DFD.[16] By the
1970s, young women, having grown up with the concept of gender
equality, developed new demands regarding their social situation. This
new self-confidence of young women was explored in various scientific
surveys. However, this research focused on the implications of full-time
employment for women and mostly ignored connected issues such as
gender roles. The GDR leadership rejected any conceptual development
of emancipation as unnecessary and actively prevented research in this
field.[17]

Opinion polls and research carried out individually by female scien-
tists such as Irene Dölling and Hildegard Maria Nickel highlighted the
confidence of young women in the 1970s and 1980s but also surviving
stereotypes, especially with regard to housework and childcare. In the
analysis of a survey from 1975, Irene Zickenrott concluded: 'Particularly
regarding young women, […] a very self-confident attitude towards the
principal questions of gender equality has been shown.'[18] The survey
also showed that housework was still done primarily by women, even
within the young generation. However, in comparison to 1970, a much

greater percentage of women indicated that they were in employment because housework did not satisfy them – 64.6% of the women asked were unwilling to imagine their lives without a job. Many, however, felt pressurised by the double burden of employment and family. Furthermore, family commitments and male chauvinism prevented women from working in better-paid jobs that carried more responsibility and gave greater job satisfaction.[19] While in the middle of the 1970s, every second married woman felt herself heavily burdened by her family and work commitments, a survey from 1982 reached more positive conclusions, especially regarding the adjustment of young people:

> Young people have internalised the social value 'equality' intensively but also in an idealised form. They identify equality within the family with the division of labour in the household and reject the model of division of labour disfavouring women, which is practiced by the generation of their parents.[20]

Divergence from the traditional stereotypes was visible in areas such as shopping, washing up, and administration, all of which were increasingly done in turns. According to the results of the survey, improvements were often linked to a higher educational level. Over 60% of women said they were satisfied with their domestic arrangements, although this result was criticised for not reflecting the reality as women continued to do most of the work within the family household.[21] In the long term, the results of the pressure put on women began to show. Health problems were one major indicator that demands were too high for at least a part of the female population.

In 1986, a psychiatrist wrote to the party agency responsible for health issues describing the negative impact the double burden had on women's health. She complained particularly about the mental and physical exhaustion endured by some women: 'In spite of a positive attitude towards employment of women and mothers in principle, full-time employment is unacceptable. All women, who reach similar conclusions should be able to agree a reduction of their working time, even without a medical certificate.'[22] Most importantly, she demanded the possibility of reduced working hours for those who required it. At the same time, she recognised that the wish to work was widespread among women. However, part-time employment was not a viable option in the opinion of Inge Lange, who bluntly refused to consider the suggestions. Instead, Lange argued that mothers of three children were already entitled to work less, namely 40 hours per week, an achievement that in her opinion solved the problem entirely.[23]

Part-time employment among women declined from 32.5% in 1970 to 29.5% in 1978 and 27.6% in 1983. Whilst 12% of women worked under 25 hours per week in 1970, only 6.7% did so in 1983. In comparison to that, 15.4% worked 25 to 35 hours in 1983. Similarly, whilst in 1971 82.3% of all women fit for work were in employment, this percentage had risen to 91.1% in 1984.[24] This initially rapid increase was based partly on the decision of the ZK SED from 1 December 1971, on the development of female employment.[25] However, by 1989, employment numbers for women had not changed markedly in comparison with the early 1980s. By that time, the pool of unemployed women able to work had become very small and women's commitment to both career and family was taking its toll although most appreciated the independence and assurance that they felt because of these changes.[26]

Furthermore, during the later 1970s a new approach to gender issues emerged in elite sections of society, which looked increasingly towards a specifically female approach to emancipation. From many of the reports and studies compiled for the 'Abteilung Frauen', reluctance to take on leadership functions emerged in spite of efforts to make them available to women.[27] A study on women in leadership positions from October 1988 concluded that women exaggerated their obligation to the family in order to avoid a career in management:

> Not only in a few cases, a lack of basic commitment and attitude among women impede their increased employment in leading positions. First place among relevant symptoms takes a certain modesty with regard to the level of achievement and qualification that has been reached and, furthermore, an over-dramatised consideration for the family, which is used as a pretext by some. Not only in a few cases, some women insist on an alternative for their own development: either taking on of a leading position or the family.[28]

Whether this reluctance was based entirely on time-consuming responsibilities within the family, or on a conscious decision to avoid the commitment required for a managerial position, is difficult to determine. However, traditional gender stereotypes survived within society and women were often reluctant to comply with the expectations of the regime fully. There is little factual evidence for this attitude other than surveys such as have been cited, mainly because the government failed to respond to it in any constructive way. It interpreted the symptoms as a female dependency on gender stereotypes rather than signs of independence. However, contemporary literary works, in particular those by

female writers, reflected this mental development and highlighted changing concepts of emancipation.

Female writers as facilitators of change

In 1977, Christa Wolf wrote in the preface to Maxie Wander's *Guten Morgen, du Schöne*: 'The opportunity, which our society has given [women]: to do, what men do, they have, predictably, turned into the question: What do men do? And do we really want this?'[29] Thereby, she expressed two major aspects of the emancipation process in the GDR. Firstly, women were given ground-breaking opportunities by the regime to challenge traditional gender types. They took them without entirely submitting to its wider implications. Based on their achievement, however, some proceeded to question and criticise society for its fundamental paternalistic attitudes and structures. Although different sections of the female population recognised to varying degrees the limitations of the type of emancipation offered to them by the regime, a minority contested them outright by either theoretical discussion or practical changes in lifestyles. Woman writers explored the issue and thereby facilitated further debate.[30]

Irmtraud Morgner, in particular, commented on some of the processes indicated above. Female protagonists in her novels *Leben und Abenteuer der Trobadora Beatriz nach Zeugnissen ihrer Spielfrau Laura* (1974) and *Amanda – Ein Hexenroman* (1983) were depicted as partaking in two different lives of which only one, based on an average daily routine within the GDR, is visible to their patriarchal environment while the other constitutes a world in which women are powerful witches. One major character in *Amanda*, Vilma, even invents a technique, the 'Leibrede', to circumvent the restrictions of the patriarchal society. She describes this approach to life as a tool that helped to stabilise East German society:

> The invention of the body-talk [Leibrede] allows me and all women to satisfy their need for communication. No building up of false richness, no cloudy heads [Kopfwolken]. But also there are no withdrawal symptoms because the customs of the land excuse women's ideas only when they do not burden the environment. As soon as I have a philosophical thought, I voice it and swallow. […] My theory: The body talk of women – a stabilising factor of the workers' – and peasants' state.[31]

Vilma's description of women's situation implies both a level of repression and an awareness of patriarchal structures that, in reality, existed in

not more than a small fraction of the female population. Nevertheless, the basic assumptions expressed in the quotation regarding both gender inequality and women's ability to circumvent the limitations of the political system, reflected female participation in the regime quite accurately. Women were very successful in the GDR. A comparatively great percentage of women studied, most juggled career and children successfully, and many took part in local politics where they were most likely to make an impact on social conditions without being caught up in the bigger political argument. Women's ability to cope and to use the system should not be underestimated.

Nevertheless, female writers themselves experienced the ambiguity of the emancipation process. In 1983 the writer Hanna-Heide Kraze sharply criticised male dominant behaviour and the lack of female members in the executive committee of the SV. Hermann Kant and others countered her complaint but Eva Strittmatter in particular argued against what she described as 'attempts to feminise the writers' union', a phrase for which she received demonstrative applause from the entire executive committee.[32] Strittmatter, thereby, opposed a specific approach to gender equality based on quotas with a fear of feminisation. Her argument was validated by both her own femaleness and the applause from the, chiefly male, executive committee. While the situation reflected the primary issues regarding emancipation, it also highlighted differentiations within the literary community.

The established writer

In many cases, established writers in the GDR perceived their position to be one of influence, even power, based on their role as educators and as ambassadors of the GDR. Furthermore, during the 1970s and 1980s, the writing community, including the thriving Samizdat literature of the 1980s, was taking on the role of the media. Writers presented information, raised and commented on issues that were excluded from the public sphere. In particular, remarks on the shortcomings of the socialist system and covert criticism were presented, often in literary code. Historical novels, mythology, and science fiction were used and the readership was expected to decipher a subtext commenting on social and political problems.[33] Hermann Kant described this specific aspect of East German literature, which was widely recognised:

Wherever readings took place, whenever one discussed whatever with whomever, always there was a subtext, which pointed at issues

that existed in reality and beyond belletrist literature. Talks in the government's hall between the ministries for culture and foreign affairs were no exception. Invited to talk about a book, one discussed the country.[34]

Many writers were convinced that their services in providing a substitute public sphere were crucial to East German society.[35] Their self-perception was closely connected to the role they played within the GDR. It was founded on the relationship with the regime and, in some cases, a feeling of duty towards the readership. In 1990, Günter de Bruyn gave a description of the responsibility that some writers felt. It enabled many to continue to live and work in the GDR despite the pressure to comply with the regime's expectations:

> To spread a thought that seemed important, one sacrificed another one [...] That this undignified calculating, haggling or submission became not even more character-destroying than it really was, can be traced back to the strong echo from the readers, which, like a reward for this submission, reached the authors in response to every critical word and which convinced them to be the spokesmen of those many, who were condemned to silence.[36]

Many writers clearly felt that their efforts were appreciated but there remains the question of how many and which East Germans actually read Christa Wolf, Stefan Heym, Volker Braun and others who expressed criticism on their behalf. In May 1981, Klaus Höpcke complained that the working-class membership of libraries was, at 20%, low and that classic titles were read little. Furthermore, from the middle of the 1970s onwards, critical works of GDR authors were published increasingly in the West and only a small number of copies were made available in the GDR. Constant paper shortages posed an additional hurdle.[37] These writers' range and impact cannot be determined with any certainty. It is also impossible to judge the validity of their claims that they were working for the interests of East German society. At the very least there was an illusion of power. In 1992, Heiner Müller commented on the special vulnerability of intellectuals to such feelings of importance:

> An intellectual [...] cannot bear it, if one accuses him of something that is not true. He cannot bear it, not to protest. And then he is in the game, then the conversation begins, then one gets to him. An intellectual always wants to play a role; one only has to offer him a role.[38]

Writers suffered under censorship and the MfS but their position as mediators between the political elite, the population, and the international community gave them a mission and some influence within the political hierarchy.[39] On 7 October 1989, for example, Christa Wolf was able to call Honecker to complain about her daughter's arrest at a demonstration – an action inconceivable to many other worried mothers.[40] Some members of the SV and of the AdK were part of the political set-up. Kant was a member of the ZK SED from 1986 onwards, spoke to the Politburo on various occasions and worked together with other functionaries of the cultural sphere such as Manfred Wekwerth, president of the AdK between 1982 and 1990, for the cultural commission of the Politburo in the 1980s.[41] Altogether, they experienced the GDR in a different way to the majority of the population because they were in positions that allowed them to be heard. Their isolation became most apparent at the end of and after the collapse of the GDR, when prominent writers were calling for the continued existence of a separate socialist state, a demand that did not echo the feelings of the majority of the population.[42]

Similarly, Vera Lengsfeld has pointed out that intellectual circles generally had the opportunity to develop and, within limits to voice their own critical opinions. Even at university, seminar discussions were often critical and books were read that were not available elsewhere in the GDR. Critical discussions took place at the AdW and she experienced the most radical arguments while on a weeklong educational course organised by the institute's SED group. Such opportunities provided a crucial valve function for intellectuals but also wrapped them into a protective cocoon that isolated them from the experience of the general population. This situation allowed them to support the system while defining themselves as nonconformist dissidents.[43] In contrast, the alternative literary scene found an identity in the rejection of the regime.

The alternative literary scene

People such as Bert Papenfuss-Gorek clashed with the establishment by adopting an approach to literature that led them beyond official agencies. During the 1970s, this younger generation was looking for dialogue with and support from established writers and for a way to live off their literary work. However, the poor response they experienced and the political rules of the organisations created for them had an alienating effect. The most typical attitude was a luxurious but pronounced

apolitical stance – a collection of young individuals concerned with the details of their everyday life rather than with big political issues or the development of the socialist personality.[44]

Naturally, the inspiration taken from day-to-day experience could not be divorced entirely from the socialist state. The reality of infiltration by the MfS made any attempt to exist in isolation impossible and, in retrospect, the self-understanding of the alternative scenes based on 'unofficial literature' and dissidence, appears dubious. The involvement of both Sascha Anderson and Rainer Schedlinski with the MfS and in particular the role of Anderson, who was a leading figure within the Prenzlauer Berg scene, has given rise to speculation that the apparently 'alternative' scene was a creation of the MfS to contain young and independent writers, although this is not supported by archival evidence.[45] However, in spite of tight controls, the poets and writers who were part of this scene developed alternative approaches to the literary guidelines of the SED.[46] In any case, the symbolic importance of the alternative scene was most crucial to contemporaries.[47]

Karen Leeder's research has shown that, like more established writers, the alternative scenes drew inspiration from the political pressures they experienced. Their work with language stood in direct opposition to the long-winded, stilted and empty phrases cultivated by the SED. For this approach Papenfuss-Gorek's 'forwiegend aber' from 1985 served as a poignant example: 'but butarkpoets have been writing for years / only of & about what makes them sick / & about a society / that predominantly throws them up'.[48] At the same time, Leeder pointed out that the alternative literary scene should not be equated with the young generation of writers and poets. Links between young and older writers were obscured although their aesthetic practice showed marked similarities. Writers such as Adolf Endler, Heiner Müller, and Elke Erb had close links to and supported writers who worked outside the establishment. Furthermore, there were many of the same age, in many cases female writers, who expressly dissociated themselves from both the linguistic experiences and the radical provocation that came from the Prenzlauer Berg.[49]

Women within the alternative literary scene were treated abominably according to Gabriele Stötzer, who because of her experiences went on to form the 'Erfurter Frauengruppe' (Women's group in Erfurt) in 1983. Already in 1988, she claimed that the alternative scene was a male domain in which women were used and degraded. Especially in Berlin, women were marginalised: 'Women were sexualised, knocked down, served as mattresses or as mediums for men.'[50] This situation was aggravated by West German publishing houses, which celebrated the male

representatives of the Prenzlauer Berg scene but ignored women.[51] Female writers were statistically underrepresented in the alternative scene whilst there were many more women who participated in the state sector. Until 1989, no literary magazine existed that was dominated by women and even within the Churches only a few women's magazines were published.[52] Their participation in unofficial literature became more common after 1985, when the risk of criminalisation had declined.[53] In contrast to this description, Elke Erb played an influential role in the Prenzlauer Berg scene helping to compile and edit a first collaborative project *Berührung ist nur eine Randerscheinung. Neue Literatur aus der DDR* (1985) which was published in Cologne. However, Erb was an established writer and member of the SV; that gave her some independence from the Prenzlauer Berg scene – a situation quite different from that of other young women in this context. It is unclear why female writers were only able to play a secondary role, although it reflected other areas of GDR life, which were outside the direct control of the state such as the family sphere in which traditional stereotypes continued to exist.

At any rate, the Prenzlauer Berg was only one alternative for young writers in the GDR. The poet Durs Grünbein, for example, grew up in the GDR and began his literary work without getting involved politically by using the support system provided by the state. He in particular became very successful after 1989 and adjusted quickly to the literary requirements of the united Germany.[54] Only a small minority of young people were actively involved with subcultures such as the Prenzlauer Berg scene or other subgroups visible throughout the GDR such as the new romantics, poppers, and heavy metal fans who were mostly defined by their fashion and musical tastes. Most young people were inclined to accommodate themselves within the system and to use the many facilities and opportunities provided for them.

Young rebels

The various groups of punks and neo-Nazis that emerged during the 1970s and 1980s increasingly developed political arguments as part of their cultural statement. In due course, they became the focus of the regime's attention.[55] In particular, the circumstances of the clash between punks and neo-Nazis outside the 'Zionskirche' in Berlin on 17 October 1987 shocked both state and Church authorities. The police were called during the clash but failed to stop the fight.[56] Whilst the state authorities used this incident to criticise the Churches for their

work with young people, Church leaders made it clear that they had been forced, against parish interests, to deal with isolated youths because of the state's negligence. The representatives of the affected parish called a vigil in response to the state authorities' refusal to engage in dialogue with young people outside the official institutions.[57] In a meeting with Jarowinsky in January 1988, Superintendent Görig insisted that after five years of working with the relevant groups he was convinced that they had no specific political agenda: 'He had realised that in most cases these people had no clear conception and did not want one.'[58] In March 1988, the Catholic Church got involved in this discussion through Cardinal Meissner, Bishop of Berlin, who informed the state of his views on the recent political events and demanded improvements.[59] State authorities, however, responded by blaming West German involvement in the activities of the neo-Nazis and censured Church press, which had used the event to comment on political affairs within the GDR, a part of the general process which started in autumn 1987 and eventually saw Churches taking a clear political stance in late summer 1989.[60] The events around the 'Zionskirche' in Berlin showed not only the existence of increasingly confident subgroups among the young generation but also the regime's reluctance to communicate with them.

The requirement to develop into 'socialist personalities' and the tendency within the regime to view young people as a passive entity dependent on outside input, led to some ignorance regarding the variety of attitudes among young people. This was reflected in most reports or analyses on the issue, notably those compiled by employees of the MfS.[61] One example for this simplistic approach was the following evaluation of the punk movement in the GDR in 1988, which was part of a dissertation compiled by two high-ranking MfS officers:

> The 'Punk-movement' is a phenomenon, which is based on violence, rejects society and is without a constructive orientation. The development of such phenomena among specific young people in the GDR is the result of increased propagation of such behaviour patterns in Western mass media with the goal to initiate a 'Punk-movement' in the GDR in line with the Western model.[62]

The text went on to blame the 'enemies' for specific disturbances and came to the conclusion that most young people who had got involved in such activity had not recognised its political background:

> Research has shown that these misused young people generally did not recognise their role within the conception of hostile forces

within and outside and they themselves displayed attitudes that rejected parts of socialist society but showed no hardened hostile positions.[63]

This analysis treats young people as essentially innocent and not especially intelligent, a tendency visible throughout the files of the MfS. The officers assumed that alternative groups were duped and exploited by the 'enemies'. However, punks and other subcultures among the young generation expressed an opposition to society that was at least partly based on generational conflicts.[64] Their activities were based neither on counter-revolutionary attitudes nor on deliberate West German intervention.[65]

Subcultures used their position to develop an identity distinct from both the parent generation and the expectations of the socialist state. This attempt included the expression of political criticism but stayed within the socialist framework and was, in fact, strongly linked to the circumstances of life in the GDR. In July 1978, the plenary meeting of the APW had warned against the consequences of an 'absolutism of collective education' which, it was feared would lead to both passive adaptation and undesirable behaviour.[66] The following statement from Matze (18) commented on the legitimacy of such concerns some years later, in 1983:

> Already young people are kept busy and disciplined too much, all answers seem dealt with by feeding them with answers and prepared opinions. Nobody seems to see that slowly creativity and fantasy of the individual are lost as a result of demands from society, which are too high, integration into demands of groups, which are too strong, that keenness to experiment, thirst for new knowledge, fantasy are submerged, something within us is becoming numb.[67]

Furthermore, in 1984 the magazine *Staat und Recht* noted a worrying increase in complaints regarding 'lack of discipline' and hooliganism among young people.[68] It was in the early 1980s that subcultures such as the punks grew most rapidly in numbers and became more active or others first emerged such as the neo-Nazis.[69] In the first instance, this development was linked to the legitimacy crisis of the GDR that developed as a response to the various political, economic, and cultural crises of the late 1970s. However, subcultures had existed throughout the GDR's existence, and should be seen in the wider context of generational differences. In fact, the paranoia with which the state met such developments in youth culture was to some extent responsible for the

political importance they acquired as young people were pushed into situations that highlighted the darker side of the socialist state. The state made it very difficult for young people to accommodate themselves within the regime.[70]

Young people's attitudes

When analysing the attitudes of young people both social differentiation and changes over time have to be considered. Although state institutions often spoke of 'the young people' as a whole and hoped that they would all become 'socialist personalities', in reality they dealt with people of various social backgrounds who were involved with different subcultures and who displayed changing social and political attitudes. The research carried out by the ZIJ in Leipzig offered some interesting analyses in this context.

Studies carried out by the ZIJ focused at groups different both in terms of age and educational level, but the following analysis will be based on data collected from mixed groups of workers, apprentices, and students primarily in the age group 16 to 25 years. In spite of the shortcomings of surveys conducted in the GDR, because of the possibility of fear among those answering questions, studies that were done after 1989 have shown that the general historical and sociological trends indicated by the material of the ZIJ were accurate.[71] The ZIJ was created in 1966 and was the only institute in the GDR that researched the attitudes and opinions of young people. The work of the ZIJ was intended to use sociology to encourage loyalty among the young generation, a task it was not able to perform for obvious reasons. However, the ZIJ was very successful in highlighting shortcomings and weaknesses within youth policy and in relation to the political socialisation of young people.[72]

Researchers within the institute used surprisingly direct questions to evaluate both the self-perception of youth and their relationship to the regime. The responses to the statements 'I am proud to be a citizen of our socialist state' or 'I feel closely bound to the GDR, my socialist fatherland' indicated three trends. First, the greatest support for the GDR existed in 1975 with 95.9% and 1985 with 97% of those questioned agreeing that this would apply to them fully or to a great extent. Second, peaks and troughs developed throughout the 1970s and 1980s, troughs in particular in the years 1970, 1978, and 1988. All three years can be linked to a specific political situation reflecting a crisis in the state–youth relationship. Third, throughout the 1970s and 1980s,

the support for the GDR was never so low as in 1988 and 1989. These tendencies are reflected in various surveys compiled by the ZIJ between 1969 and 1989.[73] Furthermore, the self-assessment of young people (14- to 16-year-olds in Leipzig) in relation to the German question in 1989 showed that 70% of them felt German but only 54.3% thought of themselves entirely as GDR citizens and 40.4% described the GDR and the FRG equally as their fatherland. Finally, when asked if the young people of the GDR felt comfortable in their state, only 10.5% answered in the affirmative without qualification.[74] By that time, the relationship between the state and the young generation was severely damaged. This assessment supports Heinz Niemann's thesis based on studies of the 'Institut für Meinungsforschung', which asserted that the SED had been successful in creating basic legitimacy and support for the regime in the 1970s.[75] This conclusion, in fact, can be applied even until the middle of the 1980s, if one uses ZIJ surveys as an indication for general developments. This general feeling of GDR citizenship, however, was quickly eroded during the events of 1988 and 1989. Sudden changes such as this do not just highlight the legitimacy crisis of the GDR or the SED's lack of success in the long term but show a great sensitivity with regard to political change and upheaval among the young generation. Political awareness, work ethics, and social responsibility had been an important part of their upbringing as socialist personalities and the apparent success of this was reflected in many ZIJ surveys. For example, 73% of 18- to 25-year-olds questioned in a survey carried out in 1988 said that they partook in voluntary social work because they enjoyed it. However, the same survey concluded that young people were less integrated in society than the older generations and that this development could be traced back primarily to negative experiences in the FDJ. A feeling of isolation and a lack of opportunities to make a direct impact on the development of society were widespread among great parts of the younger generation.[76] Although one could not call them 'socialist personalities', the generations that had grown up in the GDR had been educated and conditioned in a specific way by the political system. In 1981, a report on the ideological situation among young writers concluded:

> On the one hand, they welcomed, even demanded, the concentration on socialist values. On the other hand, however, one detects a non-dialectical view with some. The communist ideals are applied to reality in an absolute form and thereby our reality is seen primarily in its weaknesses and shortcomings.[77]

In the end, it was the state that could not satisfy the need for fairness, integration, and progress that it had instilled in many young people. However, one section of youth, that had to deal with quite different experiences, was young Christians.

Christian youth – a different experience

Individual experiences of young Christians, especially at school or in further education, could be traumatising. In 1983, Siegfried (19) described the situation at his school: 'At school, we Christians are being asked, questioned, partly attacked again and again.' Imke (17) criticised, in 1984, a rule that existed at her boarding school: 'In our dormitory block they apply very stupid educational norms. […] And what isn't there "STRICTLY FORBIDDEN". For example going to Church.' In addition, Linda T. (16) pointed out the dire consequences of a refusal to join the FDJ: 'Everyone became a member [of the FDJ]. Except for one, she was religious. As a result, the parents had to come to school and there was a big row. She was excluded from many things.'[78] Such experiences were the basis for the feeling of alienation and isolation that marked great parts of the Christian community within the GDR. However, they also enforced a strong Christian identity and community spirit.

Christians, often at an early age, were encouraged, and sometimes forced, to choose between their religion and Marxist ideology. In 1983, a report of the administrative office of the Lutheran Church in Saxony, pointed out the extent of the problem:

> Although a declaration of belief in atheism is not demanded, the Marxist-Leninist worldview is presupposed by the standardised education system. Every year, the 'Landeskirchenamt' is informed of about 50 disputes from within the area of the 'Landeskirche', whereby in general they are about the following issues: military education at school, pre-military education, admission to further education, 'Jugendweihe', the wearing of religious symbols, participation in parent committees.[79]

This number suggests that these were not one-off incidents but affected many families. An accommodation of their religious beliefs within the given structures of the regime was made almost impossible for young Christian men who were conscripted into the NVA. The only legal possibility was to opt for the 'Baueinheiten', special units that had been introduced to provide some alternative form of service for those with

pacifist convictions. In reality, however, the 'Bausoldaten' still worked for the army and were sometimes forced to carry weapons. Furthermore, this alternative service often included an acceptance of future career restrictions, specifically regarding higher education. Refusal to do either form of service could lead to imprisonment. The Churches lent their support to all those who had to make this difficult decision. Information leaflets, personal support from the responsible pastor during and after the decision process, in some cases even intervention on the political level created a supportive environment, which, however, could not always prevent traumatic experiences.[80] Often Christians had to rely on the Church leadership to intervene on their behalf. Typically for the relations between the Churches and the state, any individual solution was based on compromises and the principle of reciprocity of favours.

Christians and the state

The isolation of Christians had been maintained by the regime over decades. In the 1980s, however, an attempt by the state authorities to integrate Christians into society had led to their greater acceptance. From the early 1980s onwards, mass organisations such as the DFD and the FDJ made some efforts to incorporate members of the Christian community.[81] Although the endeavour was marked by an underlying ideological motivation, it successfully reduced isolation. However, limitations became apparent whenever Christians attempted to take a leading part in these organisations without modifying their religious adherence. Any such initiative was viewed with suspicion and in most cases it was prevented entirely. The treatment of young Christians in particular caused constant concern to the Churches, which reacted by initiating their own youth programme.

The term 'Offene Jugendarbeit' acquired great importance during the late 1970s and 1980s, especially within the Protestant Churches. In the face of growing secularisation, it described a new and increased effort both to support young Christians and to attract other young people into the Churches.[82] Both, the 'Staatssekretär für Kirchenfragen' and the 'Arbeitsgruppe Kirchenfragen' were concerned about the new funds that were poured into this area of Church work to finance both vicars with a special responsibility for youth, such as 'Jugendpfarrer' and 'Studentenpfarrer', and activities with a special appeal to young people. The 'Bluesmessen', organised by the controversial Rainer Eppelmann from 1979 onwards, were just one example of this type of work and of the problems it encountered.[83] Not only were state agencies opposed to

it, many young people outside the Churches applied their own agenda to these activities. Subcultures such as punks and homosexuals that were not welcome in other organisations were allowed to use the space provided by the Churches. The 'Junge Gemeinde' in particular offered intellectual stimulation missing in schools and universities and even attracted leading members of the FDJ, as pointed out by Imke (17) in 1984: 'The Church is the only place where one can use one's mind a little bit. I went to a bible reading. But nobody must know, because I am FDJ-secretary. But I want to learn.'[84] In particular, subjects such as militarisation and peace were of great interest to young people.[85]

The unofficial peace movement that developed out of this situation consisted of both committed Christians and young people looking for a platform. The Christian groups sometimes feared that the other young people might endanger the movement by placing it within a political context. Church groups such as the ESG Dresden worked entirely on a Christian agenda and were careful not to give the state any excuse to label them as oppositional group with political aspirations. Their appeal 'Disarmament Now' of 13 June 1978 was clearly directed at both sides of the Cold War, avoiding reference to ideological concepts.[86] The position of the Church was too precarious to risk any political involvement. Nevertheless, the group was broken up eventually by the intervention of the MfS.

Concern regarding the environment first emerged from within the Churches before it attracted a wider public interest, especially among young people in the early 1980s.[87] Although bringing specific issues to public attention was one aim of Church activity, the input of those who were not Church members soon became powerful as people, including many MfS informers, swamped the relevant groups. Bishop Gottfried Forck commented in 1987: 'We have got many groups, of which many are occupied over fifty percent by people, who are not members of the Church.'[88] Interestingly, Forck used the term 'besetzt' (occupied) with regard to the non-religious members of these groups, giving the impression of some unease within the Church leadership. In 1988, a survey found approximately 160 peace groups, eighty groups working on the environment, forty-six Third World groups and thirty women's groups, not counting the various groups concerned with human rights, homosexuality and other issues. No such development took place in the Catholic Church, which avoided any activities with political implications until 1989. Whilst there was no major strand of opinion within the Protestant Churches that saw the concerns voiced by those groups as illegitimate, attempts were increasingly made to put them into

a religious context.[89] The case of the ESG Dresden and its efforts to avoid ideological terms highlighted the differences in attitudes between young people who were members of the Churches and those who came from the outside to use the opportunities that were available to them.[90]

Especially in the late 1980s, the Churches, in spite of sharp criticism from the state authorities, were often unable to control the secular groups who had become both more independent and increasingly oppositional.[91] Within this process, the groups expected help from the Churches and criticised them for their lack of progressiveness.[92] Some Christian communities, however, felt disturbed and endangered by the different concerns of groups with little interest in religious activity. Those people and groups, who took a more calculating attitude to religious institutions, threatened their precarious position as Christians in the GDR. In 1988, Bishop Krusche expressed a general concern when he explained thus the relationship between the parish communities and the groups:

> The aims and methods of the groups can be brought into line with those of the parishes only with great difficulty; therefore those are overtaxed when they have to welcome them in their rooms and have to take on part of the responsibility for their actions, especially when they have to support results of activities they only get to know about when a fine is to be paid.[93]

Members of the Churches were always suspect in the eyes of the government, even when they were members of the CDU and had become more or less part of the state system. Their way of life and that of their children was always different and therefore under threat from discrimination, in spite of constitutional assurances to the contrary. At the same time, Church leaders fought an ongoing battle with the government to protect the position of their Churches. Members at the grassroots level were thereby forced into a community defined by both its underlying anti-government stance and tensions between the lower and upper levels of the hierarchy. They were concerned about the disruptive impact the groups had on the tentative rapprochement between government and Churches experienced during the 1980s, which had brought improvements on the grassroots level.

Christian women

Within their specific communities, the primary role of Christian women was still sometimes seen as helping their husbands. They would though

often be members of women's groups and working with the younger members of the Christian community. The Protestant Churches in the GDR also employed women as parish priests. Oberkirchenrätin Christa Lewek, for example, was very influential within the administration of the BEK. However, as in other institutions of the GDR, the position of women in leading positions was a rarity, as Lewek herself pointed out when addressing the Ecumenical Committee in Geneva in 1974. Regarding gender equality, her opinion seemed closely related to that of the 'Arbeitsgruppe Frauen' in the ZK SED, namely that legal preconditions for equality were in place but that they had not been successfully translated into reality. Furthermore, she sharply criticised part-time employment when stating: 'Seen objectively, part-time employment re-enforces existing traditional structures.'[94] Lewek pointed out that within the Churches patriarchal allocation of gender roles was still common and changes were difficult in the face of Church traditions. In her opinion, the Churches' confrontation with the challenges posed by the secular state was unavoidable in this context: 'Today, the Churches have to respond to the challenges of the secular society, even in this area.'[95] Clearly there were similarities between Church and state in this respect though the state was providing the lead. In contrast, in meetings with DFD groups Christian women often discussed problems such as part-time employment for mothers to ensure an appropriate upbringing of children, the education system generally and, in so doing, the militarisation of society. They showed a specific awareness and attitude in line with concerns voiced within the Churches at the time.[96] The DFD targeted the wives of clergymen in particular, a strategy that was met with suspicion by the Churches but also acknowledged the importance of these women within the Christian community.[97]

Within the Protestant Churches various groups worked specifically with and for Christian women, the 'Frauenhilfe', 'Frauenarbeit', and 'Pfarrfrauenarbeit' representing the major branches. The 'Facharbeitskreis Zusammenarbeit Mann und Frau in Kirche, Familie und Gesellschaft' (FAK Mann und Frau) within the BEK was particularly progressive and influential in this context. It collated and made available discussion material on gender issues, on abortion for example in 1972, and also general concerns such as language and the situation of single women within the Churches. The working group maintained a vibrant exchange with ecumenical activity in these fields.[98] On various occasions, it presented suggestions for reforms and critical analyses of the position of women within the Churches to the BEK.[99] Furthermore, in the middle of the 1980s a new initiative developed, which was

working on the basis of feminist theology.[100] In this small circle of women, literary texts from Morgner, Wolf, and Wander were used for discussions.[101] The closeness of the state's theoretical concept of gender equality and the expectations of Christian women was remarkable and probably based on the difficulties encountered by women within the male-dominated traditional structures of the Churches.[102]

The examples cited above highlights the diversity within the Christian community. As in the three other categories – youth, writers, and women – social groups were never homogeneous entities, although the subgroups and overlaps that occurred often reflected general attitudes, problems, and tensions that existed within the specific social categories.[103] Christian writers, for example, represented a subgroup in which a specific aspect of their self-perception, their commitment to Christianity, shaped fundamentally the way in which their literary works were received and their position within the East German cultural scene.

The isolation of Christian writers

Within the GDR's cultural sphere, Christian writers experienced severe isolation which was supported by the regime's preference for rigid labelling of social groups. In particular young Christian writers easily fell outside official institutions when they decided to profess their commitment to Christianity in their literary work. Educational facilities, that were provided specifically for young writers, did not cater for this approach. The courses at the literary institute in Leipzig, for example, demanded and encouraged a strong ideological allegiance to the regime. Within publishing houses catering for Christian literature, such as the Evangelische Verlagsanstalt (EVA) and the CDU's Union Verlag, only a little could be done to improve the disadvantaged position of Christian writers. One initiative of the EVA, *Anzeichen*, ran from 1967 to 1988 and was edited by Ilsemarie Sänger. The project was dedicated to the publication of first works by Christian writers, who were mostly in their late twenties and thirties. Six anthologies were published in this series, which featured poems and short stories not necessarily marked by direct references to the Christian faith but commenting on life, on specific musicians, poets, and painters, even on Auschwitz and Germanness.[104] Whatever approach was taken, the label 'Christian literature' brought with it segregation within the cultural scene, even when the individual displayed his or her loyalty towards East German society.[105]

Controversy was attached to the literary work of Christians and the term 'Christian literature' in two ways. As indicated, the regime's

ideological claim to power and the pretensions of socialist realism constituted a major constraint on Christian literature. Furthermore, theological considerations, both in terms of dialectic theology and conservative orthodoxy, questioned the validity of the concept of Christian literature.[106] Nevertheless, the concept of Christian literature can be defined with a reference to writers who, in their works, profess their faith. In 1972, Ilsemarie Sänger outlined the implications of the term in a postscript to *Anzeichen Zwei*, when she described the published texts as an expression of the writers' hope:

> To prove oneself in the current environment and consciously free themselves from established pre-conceptions of Christian poetry, which exist by many readers. [...] This freeing-oneself cannot mean the rejection of all that is traditional but means the examination of intellectual content and traditional values, the sifting through and penetration of gone-by experiences.[107]

Accordingly, the anthology testified to 'a Christian-realistic worldview and attitude to life' whereby lived experiences are seen 'in the context of Christian belief, are marked by expressions of Christian belief'.[108]

Many writers, whose commitment to Christianity was reflected in their works, lived in the GDR: not only Rosemarie Schuder, Jürgen Rennert, Christa Johannsen, and Ingo Zimmermann, whose positions were exceptional as they all worked in executive committees of the SV, but also writing pastors such as Gerhard Dallmann, who was asked to join the Rostock branch of the SV because none of their members had 'his worldview', the Magdeburg bishop Johannes Jänicke, the theologian Emil Fuchs, and the CDU politician Luitpold Steidle. Rainer Prachtl who was working for the Catholic Church and was later CDU president of the Landtag in Mecklenburg-Vorpommern, had a poem published in an anthology by the Union Verlag and the works of Beate Petras, another politician, in the above mentioned anthology *Anzeichen Zwei* edited by Ilsemarie Sänger in 1972.[109] The lexicon *Schriftsteller der DDR* (1974), published in Leipzig, cited about forty writers that were described explicitly as 'christlich-humanistisch' or 'religiös', terms that were applied to writers working in many different genres. It marked those who were forced to work beyond, what the former functionary of the East German CDU, Günter Wirth, described as the 'official public sphere' in his noteworthy article on Christian literature in the GDR.[110]

The concept was a non-issue in the GDR, even within institutions such as the SV and the AdK that were designed to cater for the literary

community. However, writers whose Christian background was reflected in their literary work continued to write in the GDR, and during the 1980s they were increasingly able to feature problems of Christian life within socialism in their work.[111] This specific section of society existed, as many other subgroups did, in spite of the difficulties it encountered within the centralised system.

Conclusion

The groups discussed above often saw and defined themselves distinctly in the categories that were applied by the state. A Christian was as much part of an outsider community, as a woman was seen to require special support. The state expected that writers were the educators of the people, and that youth was almost entirely dependent on outside input. To some extent at least the regime's expectations were integrated into behaviour patterns – most women did not feel the need to emancipate themselves further and young people were often able to hide behind their apparent malleability. In addition, however, the self-perception and characteristics of the various groups and subgroups went far beyond those crude generalisations to include differentiated attitudes based on social background, education, and experience. Furthermore, in all categories generational differences and gender roles were of major importance, determining both political and social attitudes. Both the differentiation within the rough categories applied to East German society by the regime and the overlaps that have been highlighted in this chapter show the shortcomings of Sigrid Meuschel's concept 'entdifferenzierte Gesellschaft'.

In the following chapter, the internal dynamic of society, which was based on social and cultural differentiation, will be discussed. The tensions both between sections of society and towards the regime will be explored to consider further the implications of diversity on the relationship between society and the regime. Such differentiations accommodated an aspect of social and political interdependence within the GDR. Utilising the discussion of diversity within East German society and its resulting internal dynamic, Chapter 6 will develop the issue of participation by focusing on the mutual dependency that evolved between the regime and society after 1971, when an interest in co-existence and the will to compromise became prime characteristics of this socialist state.

5
Tensions

In the previous chapter, diversity within East German society has been explored. Special attention was given to the self-perception of and the overlaps between social groups, both based on the previous analysis of shortcomings within the political set-up of the GDR. Building on this, Chapter 5 will concentrate on tensions that occurred within and between the various groups and on those that marked the relationship to the regime. To highlight both the regime's attempts to manipulate social groups and the limitations of state control, the discussion will focus on four specific areas of discontent – continued social divisions, using the specific position of writers as a case study, gender roles, generational conflict, and the outsider position of Christians. Conflict areas will be explored with reference to specific incidents and issues that influenced relations within groups and dealings with the regime without threatening the political system. In contrast, Chapters 6 and 7 will concentrate on the analysis of stabilising factors such as participation and interdependence.

Interaction was expressed most openly in tensions. In this context, the term 'tension' refers to a situation whereby one or more groups within the East German population, identifiable by social background, age, gender, educational achievement, profession, and world view, express an opinion or behave in a way which criticises, ignores or isolates other equally identifiable groups. Isolation in particular was a powerful tool used not only by the state to subdue specific sections of the population, but also by segments of society in their wrangle for the place closest to material or political power. Tensions within the system, which affected the groups, were caused partly by continuing social divisions, although those were not defined primarily by the ownership of private property but by privileges that were handed out by the state and which

were retractable.[1] The existence of social divisions within socialist society highlighted the flaws of the state's ideology. Reality fundamentally undermined official propaganda claims that depicted life in the GDR in simple categories and discounted fundamental tensions such as the generational conflict.[2] By using social benefits and isolation tactics, the regime was able to control and influence the specific social situation of various target groups and subgroups. This affected most notably the gender issue but also the conflict of generations and the isolation of minorities, especially in relation to fringe groups and dissidents. Honecker continued to steer social forces to the regime's advantage throughout the 1980s and did so with appreciable levels of success. Only in the late 1980s did his system of social intervention begin to collapse, taking with it the entire political system. Tensions between social groups and subgroups occurred in various areas. None threatened the regime and some were potentially beneficial to the stability of the SED dictatorship.

Social division: a consequence of privilege

In many cases, tensions were based on the differences in the relative standing of the groups within the regime. Social and political privileges that were bequeathed to various parts of the population, sometimes to specific subgroups, exacerbated social division regardless of their original purpose. Within the GDR context, established writers were one of, if not the most privileged section. However, their privileged position was somewhat limited by the needs of the regime which demanded cooperation at the international and the domestic level. In contrast, writers associated with the Prenzlauer Berg scene were in danger of imprisonment and forced to survive on the odd temporary job. They in particular made an issue of their relationship with the state and, in many cases, avoided political constraints by steering clear of clubs for young writers, membership in the SV, and approved publishing houses.[3] The alternative scene in Leipzig, Dresden, and Berlin and the growing Samizdat literature of the 1980s supported this part of the literary community. Individuals such as Franz Fühmann and Christa Wolf tried to bridge the gap with the establishment, while the MfS kept the alternative scene under constant surveillance.

The tensions that arose from this difficult situation were expressed on various occasions, none of which achieved such high profile as the Biermann affair. It sent shock waves through the GDR. At the same time many voices were heard from the population, including from many

young people that supported the regime's decision and asked why it had not acted earlier.[4] According to official sources, at the beginning of December 1976, the Biermann affair was not dominating discussions among young people anymore.[5] In spite of his debarment from working as a singer over many years, Biermann had never ceased his political criticism and his elevated position allowed him to be much more blatantly dissident than the general population could ever hope to be without ending up in prison. Before 16 November 1976, Biermann had not been popular in the GDR; he became fashionable as a political martyr only afterwards.[6]

Taking Biermann as an example for the tensions that existed between a specific social group and the rest of the population might seem audacious. However, it was typical for the East German state that public opinion came to the fore only very rarely. A political scandal such as the Biermann affair was most likely to cause a direct and blunt reaction, which offers some insight into the stresses within society. The popular resentment that came to light is often overlooked in the context of the protests that came from parts of the intelligentsia.[7] Furthermore, most of the protests concerned themselves with the way in which he was dealt with, or not dealt with within the GDR, and not with the fact that he had been 'punished' for his political statements.[8] By the late 1970s, the latter had become more acceptable to a population used to political repression than the fact that a person, who had shown political dissent openly, was now able to live in West Germany, the Promised Land for many East Germans. The position of established writers and artists with some international recognition was much stronger in relation to the state, than that of ordinary people.

However, by the early 1980s, the threat of a nuclear war had become almost more pressing than the literary and political limitations experienced by individuals. In particular, the 'Berliner Begegnungen' in 1981 and 1983 were a powerful expression of the concern foremost on the minds of most people at the time. These meetings between prominent writers from East and West, who discussed the threat of nuclear war and other implications of the Cold War, caused much tension between the regime and some of the most prominent East German writers.[9] In January 1982, the AdK called for talks with those members who had expressed opinions that were either not shared by the regime, or not overtly supportive of the regime's position on peace.[10] Furthermore, individuals such as Hermann Kant and Christa Wolf were confronted with outright rejection for having participated in the 'Berliner Begegnung' in spite of a Politburo statement that officially welcomed

the results of the meeting. In a society marked by a pronounced lack of information and open discussion, even the expression of opinions, irrespective of their political stance, became suspect.[11] Although the 'Berliner Begegnung' highlighted some of the opportunities available to established writers, the experience of censorship was shared by all writers and permeated even this international event.

Implications of forced conformity

Censorship and internal pressure to conform put strict limitations on the content and style of literary works. However, it also encouraged writers to make an art of considering which phrase or paragraph the censor might overlook. For some, hiding critical passages became a game.[12] Uwe Kolbe, a controversial young writer at the time, was able to publish his poem *Kern meines Romans* in 1981, although it was hiding a sharp and crude attack on the political system in an acrostic.[13] The poem was banned some time later, after its hostile message had been revealed. Such incidents gave encouragement to insiders who knew of the circumstances, but had little impact on the political situation in the GDR. Nevertheless, censorship continued to be an issue throughout the 1980s and was repeatedly attacked by writers.[14] Crucially, often the most effective censorship was contained in criticism expressed by other writers or by institutions catering for the literary community.

In-fighting within the SV was common. It included mutual accusations, often questioning a writer's ideological commitment, and sharp criticism of their literary achievement.[15] In 1972, Erik Neutsch complained of the high editions of works granted to Kant, Christa Wolf and even controversial writers such as Günter Kunert, while Neutsch's works were not published.[16] In 1973, members of the Berlin branch of the SV criticised the elitist division between the SV, the PEN, and the AdK, and questioned the elevated position of individual writers.[17] However, the deepest rifts occurred in 1976 and in 1979, when nine writers were fined and excluded from the SV for their infringement of the 'Druckgenehmigungsverfahren'.[18] The pressures from within the AdK and SV to conform were strong and, especially in combination with the regime's power, effective. In December 1976, the AdK addressed those who had signed the petition that openly criticised the treatment of Biermann. In strong words, the executive committee attacked some of its most eminent members: 'Erich Arendt, Franz Fühmann, Stephan Hermlin, [...] Christa Wolf, don't you see where you have got to? Who rejoices in your behaviour? We? We are of the opinion that it time for

you to say: I was wrong.'[19] This kind of pressure forced writers such as Christa Wolf to withdraw in recognition of their political impotency.[20]

In reaction to the censorship applied by the regime and the intervention of institutions such as the AdK, some writers developed specific methods of dealing with difficulties surrounding them and their work. In an interview from 1988, Gabriele Eckart described the implications of such pressures on the individual:

> Naturally, one is tempted, sometimes unconsciously, one doesn't notice, to censor oneself during writing, to leave out text about which one expects to get into trouble […] writing in the GDR is a constant struggle against this temptation. Most writers in the GDR have succumb to this temptation long since.[21]

The pressures that were applied by the regime created tensions that shaped relations within this social group and divided it into hostile sections.[22] These divisions existed among the established writers, mostly expressed within institutions such as the PEN, the AdK, and the SV, but even more so between official institutions and the members of the alternative or independent literary scene, who had been unable or unwilling to participate in the establishment.

The refusal to participate

The Prenzlauer Berg scene of the 1980s was a centre of alternative artistic and intellectual tendencies, drawing together previous developments in Dresden, Leipzig, and other areas, often among art students. It constituted one of the layers harbouring subcultural groups beyond official structures. This collection of individualists supported links to other political niches. Leonhard Lorek and Stefan Dörig established links to the Churches, Rüdiger Rosenthal tied in the cultural opposition of the 1970s, and Ekkehard Maass connected the literary scene with dissident groups. There existed only few connections to the established writers.

The tensions between the Prenzlauer Berg poets and the established literary scene were manifold. They centred on political attitudes, differences in social positions, the participation in privileges crucial to writers such as the right to publish, and on artistic differences expressed, for example, in the usage of language.[23] Bernd Wagner, who left the Prenzlauer Berg scene in the middle of the 1980s, stressed the complexity of these tensions that had fundamental implications for the

cultural community:

> This overdue loss of illusion, the withdrawal of a common consensus
> between power and culture, it also caused a discharge from the 'con-
> federation of socialist writers'. […] The release from an almost priestly
> post as always present social conscience, from the results of the
> dialectical sickness forced on everybody, the constant consideration
> of objective factors, which justify, or do not justify, this or that; the
> concentration, even whilst turning away, on Marxism as the guiding
> principle of one's own actions.[24]

Within the AdK, the problem of young writers, who were working out-
side of official institutions, was discussed on various occasions. In spite
of support expressed by Franz Fühmann, Günter de Bruyn, and Christa
Wolf, for example, Hermann Kant indicated both his own doubts and
the political implications of the alternative scene in a meeting of the
literary section in 1983. He questioned Fühmann's judgement outright
when he stated: 'To me, there have been mentioned just a few social
misfits too many in connection with genius.'[25] Such reservations pre-
vented initiatives that might have been taken by the AdK to accommo-
date or at least get to know the alternative scene. Five years later, in
April 1988, Karl Mickel pointed out that the people working outside
of official literary institutions and organisation probably amounted to
a second SV both in terms of numbers and talent.[26] The tactic of refus-
ing to accept and take part in the political and social environment was
common. It reflected a specific stance to life in the GDR.

A minority looking for alternatives

The files of the MfS have shown the existence of many subgroups within
East German society that had their own expectations and individual
attitudes. If a person stepped beyond institutional activity, for example
by waiting for a place at university after school but never actually start-
ing a course of study, it was easy to continue living at the margins of
these structures. Such a lifestyle was not necessarily accompanied by loss
of status and in financial terms, people survived because of the cheap-
ness of basic foodstuffs and rents. Social insurance presented only a
minor problem: one could get insurance for a small amount of money
and anyway doctors did not generally ask for an insurance card. It was
possible to follow an alternative lifestyle within Honecker's GDR.

Playing with language as the Prenzlauer Berg poets did, collab-
orative art projects, or living with other young families in shared

accommodation – any form of alternative lifestyle constituted a statement of self-assertion not only in response to a dictatorial state but also towards the remainder of society that were perceived as conformist. In 1992, Vera Lengsfeld pointed out: 'To me, activity within the peace movement was not just oppositional activity but an attempt to live together in new ways within a fossilised system.'[27] Especially in the 1980s, the number of people looking for alternative lifestyles and cultural forms increased noticeably. From the middle of the 1980s, independent bands playing jazz, rock and punk music, often using rooms in Churches that had been provided under the protective shield of 'Offene Jugendarbeit', increased in numbers and began to produce their own music tapes. Independent galleries opened up, for example from 1985 *Eigen + Art* in Leipzig selling Samizdat literature and art. In the middle of the 1970s, Jena was most important but soon Dresden, Halle, and Berlin developed their own centres of independent and alternative life. Leipzig took on a special role in the late 1980s. It was here that various symptoms of economic and moral decline overlapped: industrial deterioration, decline of the infrastructure, environmental problems, dilapidated houses. At the same time, the town constituted a cultural centre with the 'Gewandhausorchester', the 'Thomaner Chor' and many art schools including the Institute for Literature concentrating students in one area. It has been well documented that art schools often gave focus to independent thought and dissident behaviour.[28] Furthermore, the MfS concentrated its forces on Berlin allowing more stability in the Leipzig groups. The local administration thought that they had the situation under control but at the beginning of 1989 between twenty and twenty-five political groups operated in Leipzig involving over 300 people. The average age of activists in the groups was 25 years and all social layers were represented.[29] The tensions surrounding these small groups ranged from the cultural issues, to social and structural problems, such as the position of women and homosexuals in society, to political dissent. These groupings tended to be made up of many activists with an intellectual or artistic background.[30] About a third of the members were pastors or other employees of Churches. Furthermore, up to half of the members of the important political group 'Neues Forum' had attended university.[31] In most cases, such groups existed in isolation from the public and often were not aware of other groups with a similar background or agenda. Only in the late 1980s communication networks developed and helped them to overcome political and social barriers.[32]

The GDR contained many subgroups that existed at the edges of society, where they had been forced by the regime's rejection of

individualism and the activities of the MfS. Anything in the GDR that followed either too little, too much or not at all the party line, was suspect. Many people were coerced out of neutral positions by the existence of too many rules, by their wish for independence, by their tiredness of politics, by the accidental over-stepping of rules or by being too idealistic. Young people in particular were endangered by the strict limitations while old communist anti-fascists could find protection in their loyal image. Nevertheless, in almost all instances, the groups were interested in improving East German society without wishing to terminate it entirely. One MfS report from 1978 stated clearly: 'All these different groups of people do not support the restoration of imperialism but work for democratic change within socialism.'[33] However, democratic change required the participation of society. Borders and travel restrictions had closed off the GDR from other political and social systems. Young people in particular had grown up in the GDR and were products of its education system. The majority had no experience of alternatives other than through Western TV or through hearsay, neither a very reliable source. Their dealings were with the social and political sphere in which they lived and where they experienced and created tensions.

The inflexible political system produced subcultures. They were generally and indiscriminately seen as potential enemies of the state. Isolation tactics were successfully carried into society frightening both the groups and the public into keeping a safe distance from each other. Compared to the total population, only a small number of people were involved with the groups but their diversity and activity turned them into an important social force. Their very existence undermined the view of the GDR as a streamlined society under the total control of the SED regime.

Generational conflict

The make-up of various subcultures suggested a conflict of generations in addition to the social and political tensions indicated earlier. Although the GDR always denied the existence of it, friction between different generations existed on several levels within East German society. Already in 1976, the MfS recognised a refusal among specific sections of the young generation to communicate with the state and the older generations it stood for: 'This isolation towards the outside refers primarily to the official institutions of the state, the political organisations or those, who think differently, that is adults in general.'[34] On one level, the tensions presented by the Prenzlauer Berg scene, by many of

the dissident groups and even by the women's movement, were expressions of the younger generation's need for rebellion against a parent generation.[35]

In the GDR, the regime strongly identified with the older generation, their attitudes spawned in the 1950s and forcefully upheld by ideology and the state authorities.[36] In the 1970s and 1980s, it proved almost impossible for members of the young generation to occupy an influential and privileged position either within the political, economic or cultural hierarchies in spite of high educational achievement.[37] The search for alternative life styles and the creation of subgroups was one result of this situation, which prevented an often highly qualified group of people from developing their personal potential. The generational conflict, however, worked both ways. In view of the situation described above, it might seem surprising that the old generation whose representatives dominated the Politburo found themselves in such dire circumstances that they regularly complained about the social benefits provided for young people generally and young families in particular.[38] One female worker from Lübbenau complained to Erich Honecker, after the XI Party Congress in April 1986 had announced some new social benefits for the young generation: 'But my dear Herr Honecker, we were slightly disappointed after all that our generation, which had made great sacrifices to prepare the way for our comfort today, had again be short-changed.'[39] The inadequate social provisions for the older generation and especially pensioners will not be discussed here in detail. However, the nature of the relationship between old and young was a defining part of the social tensions within East Germany.

The generational conflict became crucial to the social, cultural, and political spheres in the 1980s and helped to prepare the final collapse of the GDR. For the SED, which had always made so much of the young generation and the new socialist personality type that would lead the GDR into a communist future, it proved impossible to deal with and control the various expressions of the conflict. The social benefits for young people overburdened the economy and angered the older generation whilst they did not satisfy the younger ones, who only expected more as they compared their lives to that depicted on Western TV stations. Repression proved counterproductive, only encouraging conflict and turning social tension into a political issue that focused attention onto the state. Again, at least one officer of the MfS recognised the problem relatively early, in 1976. In his opinion, young people would always question given structures and attitudes without necessarily opposing the state in a political sense. He thought it normal: '[that] young people,

who have experienced their surroundings consciously and who have come to terms with them, also have reservations and react sceptically towards these phenomena. Such a normal symptom cannot be described as opposition.'[40] Although the MfS made efforts to rehabilitate young people who had fallen foul of the system, the regime often overreacted in the first place and, so, alienated a section of society that otherwise might have been inclined to support the socialist state.

Conflicts were expressed in various ways and problems surfaced especially at big cultural events such as local celebrations, the 'Pfingsttreffen' or the 1973 World Youth Festival. In the mid-1970s, for example, the annual public festival of Schmölln, the 'Sozialistische Pfefferbergfest', began to be taken over by groups of young working-class people between eighteen and twenty-five who, according to MfS reports, displayed debauched and salacious behaviour.[41] Over the years, the number of these young people attracted by the festival had risen from 150 in 1976 to 1100 in 1979. More importantly, in 1979, stark political criticism was voiced publicly for the first time. The MfS officer commented:

> Whilst in previous years one pretended to be politically indifferent, in 1979 we were able to pin-point such arguments as: here everything is being turned 'red', this must put off young people; we have our own beliefs and ideals, we don't want anything to do with communists; in this state we all are being lied to and deceived, therefore we reject this state; a state that implied to be free but does not grant liberalness, has no future in current times.[42]

Such outspokenness among young people was rare and often alcohol-induced. Nevertheless, it reflects an undercurrent of tension, which surfaced only in specific circumstances often linked to group behaviour, alcohol and criminal offences.[43]

In 1986, a DFD report on the health of the population documented a continuous increase in alcoholism among young people, a tendency also visible among young Christians.[44] Furthermore, juvenile delinquency increased noticeably during the late 1970s. From 1976 onwards, the MfS noted a rise in hostility towards the regime among young people. The same study estimated that people under the age of twenty-five had committed 90% of all violations of the state border between 1975 and 1978.[45] MfS reports tended to cite crime rates in connection with the numbers of those, who applied for permission to leave the GDR and of young men, who refused to serve in the army.[46] Apparently, the regime viewed these problems as expressions of a more fundamental

conflict. From 1979 onwards, crime rates were falling slowly, possibly because of the development of the groups within the Churches, which attracted many young people and gave direction to a general conflict situation.[47] The existence of underlying tensions was highlighted by juvenile delinquency and the high rate of young people participating in the 'Offene Jugendarbeit' accommodated by the Protestant Churches.[48]

Generational conflicts were inherent in the political system of the GDR as the institutional set-up discouraged the integration of young people into responsible political, economic, and social positions in spite of promising propaganda slogans. In the same way, the older generation felt neglected with regard to social provision. Thereby, major parts of the population were denied a stake in society. For both groups, the antipathy was initially mutual. However, by 1989 such tensions had found a new single focus in critical attitudes towards the political elite. This meeting of generations constituted a crucial step towards the collapse of the GDR. Evidently, tactics intended to isolate specific sections of society had been crucial to the stability of the regime.

Isolation tactics

The political elite took a very similar approach to tensions between the generations and to the isolation of minorities, dissidents, and fringe groups. In all cases, no official policies existed. The generational conflict was seen as a phenomenon entirely linked to capitalist social structures that could not exist in the GDR. Any policy tackling this problem would have been an unacceptable acknowledgement of internal problems. Dealings with dissidents and fringe groups, who were seen to be at least potentially dissident, were a matter for the MfS and therefore kept secret. Instead of addressing the existing frictions directly, policy makers tackled related areas such as youth policy. In propaganda youth and youth policy played a huge role. The young had to be protected from negative outside influences and also from their own misguided activities. The task of the policy makers was to integrate those, who were deemed to be loyal or educable but also to isolate potential troublemakers. Their work was complemented by the activities of the MfS, which aimed to contain the latter. Various policies were used in this attempt to apply unnaturally tight categories to a hugely diverse group of people.

First, the selective handing out of privileges or social benefits to the young people who complied with the requirements of the state was one way of controlling youth. Therefore, access to higher education depended on a person's outward behaviour and appearance. Social

benefits for young families encouraged many to marry early. This practice put them into a more controllable social framework, although an unusually high divorce rate resulted from this practice. In a similar vein, the 'Arbeitsgruppen Junger Autoren' (AJA) were set up for young writers. Participation in these special work groups was one of the few ways towards achieving the legal status of professional writer by becoming a member of the SV. However, together with the Institute of Literature in Leipzig they were specifically designed to select and support young authors, who did not challenge the party line.[49] The isolation of young people, who had slightly different ideas or resented political indoctrination, forced many into the category 'dissident'.

Second, in partial recognition of young people's need for responsibility, experience, and even a bit of adventure, preferably without adult intervention, the SED created tasks which the FDJ handed down to various groups of young people. The building in the mid-1970s of the 'Drushba-Trasse', an immense oil pipe leading from the Soviet Union to the GDR, was probably the biggest and most difficult of these projects. Mostly, however, such tasks centred on fulfilling the plan in factories, taking part in additional work projects such as harvesting apples, refurbishing old houses to bolster the weak East German economy or organising demonstrations in celebration of one of the many political occasions.[50] They certainly did not provide adventure of any type and in most cases adults prevented young people from taking responsibility.[51] Furthermore, far too many of the formalised youth projects such as the 'FDJ-Aufgebote' were introduced, which, over the years, reduced their appeal immensely, as one FDJ member from a tractor factory in Schönebeck pointed out in 1977: 'The fuss about the 60th anniversary has just finished and already the next is starting on the occasion of the 30th [anniversary].'[52] The resentment that speaks from the quotation reflected a general frustration at being constantly kept occupied, both at work and in one's spare time. Most of the work groups and projects specially designed for young people became a way of spotting and isolating outsiders, who refused to participate. Within GDR society, the average person who did not want to attract the attention of the MfS would have been afraid to be connected to such outsiders.

The success of isolation tactics encouraged the development of communities such as the Prenzlauer Berg scene, the many groups of the citizen's movement in the 1980s, and the separate identities cultivated by fringe groups such as punks and neo-Nazis. The MfS targeted all of these groups and tried to keep them contained in their restricted enclaves. In the end their existence undermined the political system

because it contradicted the total claims of the regime. The tensions created by isolation tactics became most visible with regard to Christians, to whom they were applied more openly. One specific conflict that caused much tension centred on the movement 'Schwerter zu Pflugscharen' (swords to ploughshares). As Bishop Axel Noack pointed out, this movement, which, in combination with other developments such as the 'Friedensdekade' (peace decade) and the SOFD initiative, called for a non-military alternative to the compulsory national service, merits special attention: 'because they mark a generational break, which was important for the development in the GDR. In some sense, a new generation is making itself heard in a way, which cannot be ignored'.[53] The movement undermined Church–state relations in the early 1980s, after the slogan and emblem had been issued for the annual celebrations of the 'Friedensdekade' in 1980 and 1981.[54] In 1981 the theologically based symbol acquired great popularity among young Christians and attracted the interest of other young people. It was increasingly worn publicly and was soon seen by the regime as an expression of opposition to the official policy on peace. Those, who wore the symbol were threatened and even forced to leave school. In March 1982, state secretary Gysi officially informed Bishop Hempel that the symbol, because of its political implications, was not to be worn in public.[55] 'Schwerter zu Pflugscharen' was spreading beyond the Christian community and it was almost impossible for the Churches to protect young people, who insisted on wearing the symbol, from the regime's onslaught.[56] However, in this case, the effect proved to be ambivalent. While Christians were viewed with suspicion and were discriminated against by parts of the East German population, the regime's hostility towards the Churches also helped to depict them as a safe haven for alternative groups.[57]

The outsider position of Christians

Christians in the GDR occupied a special position. Although a large number of Christians lived in the GDR up to 1989, they had been a minority since the early 1970s.[58] Furthermore, the state's policy of confrontation had a marked impact on their standing in society. Young Christians especially experienced discrimination within the education system and regarding their professional advancement. The regime was actively isolating the Christian community.

The Churches' unique position as an institution outside the control of the SED prevented individual Christians from full integration into the

socialist society. Their loyalty to the socialist system was marked out as a special achievement of the communist cause, their objections were decried as the work of the enemy, and their quiet conformity was viewed suspiciously not just by the state but also by all other parts of society. Accordingly, Christian women, partly in the context of feminist theology, were never able to strike up a working relationship with the secular feminist groups developing at the universities and the AdW in spite of various efforts to contact them. These approaches were simply ignored.[59]

The tensions surrounding Christians were always most apparent within the education system, in relation to the FDJ, and concerning the 'Offene Jugendarbeit' of the Protestant Churches. Restricted access to further education and career advancement were common problems for Christians. In some cases, young Christians were treated relatively fairly within the school environment but their parents were refused participation in the usual parent groups. In other circumstances, even Christians who had been highly active and loyal within school and the FDJ might be refused entry to the Erweiterte Oberschule (EOS), to specific study courses or professions.[60] At a meeting in 1988, a teacher from Wernigerode made an enquiry on behalf of a female Christian student who hoped to enter the teaching profession, either in a kindergarten or a primary school. The girl was described as a very good student. The second district secretary of the SED district committee replied as follows:

> The question had been wrong: First of all, a student who is a member of the Church could not have shown very good results and very good behaviour. Apparently, the student had been assessed wrongly at school. A student of fourteen should have seen enough of our worldview at school to have freed herself from the Church or she should not have been considered for a pedagogic career.[61]

This answer can not be dismissed as a spontaneous reaction by a particularly prejudiced official. The question had been supplied to him in writing before the meeting took place. Furthermore, some of the teacher's colleagues agreed with the district secretary. For this attitude to exist as late as 1988 seems remarkable bearing in mind the legal provisions for Christians. Although there were plenty of instances where Christians were able to become teachers without many problems, this case highlights prejudices in society that went beyond the regime's official intentions. In the public sphere, no policy statement existed that

ordered Christians to be treated discriminatorily. In many cases, such problems were caused by individuals, who were both second-guessing their superiors' wishes and applying their personal inclinations.

Specific issues such as the introduction of military education at schools in September 1978 increased tension. Although only few refused to participate in it for fear of reprisals, many 'Junge Gemeinden' discussed the implications of military education at length in the late 1970s. The ESG Dresden, for example, held discussions, wrote petitions and open letters trying to prevent the introduction of military education at schools.[62] Its activities were part of a general peace initiative, which in parts constituted an expression of the difficult position of Christians within East German society. Previously, the issue of military service for Christians had been discussed but had had few ramifications outside the Churches.[63]

In addition, the isolated position of Christians repeatedly caused specific incidents that combined to create suspicion and hostility. Even the groups of the citizens' movement, which comprised a minority drawn from various parts of society, existed in relative independence within the Christian communities they had chosen as their bases. Their connections to the Churches were often manipulative relationships based on the need for protection, information, and links to the West. The development of the group 'Kirche von unten' (Church from below), for example, highlighted the tensions even in this specific area where cooperation might have been expected.[64] The success of atheistic acculturation that had been forced on the East German population proved overwhelming in many respects.

Differentiation was a fundamental aspect of GDR society. Without fatally undermining the regime, it caused confrontations both between and within social groups, which sometimes were stimulated by state intervention. However, in specific cases such as gender relations, conflicts were based on the persistence of traditional social differences.

Men versus women?

Gender relations were a social issue which caused tensions in all spheres of life, both within and between different social groups. In the GDR, the relationship between men and women was determined largely by state policy that encouraged women's emancipation. Officially, women were supposed to be treated in the same way as men. This claim, in purely factual terms, was not justified by statistics, which showed differences in salaries and a lack of women in leadership positions.[65] However, the dealings between men and women in the GDR were based on similar

experiences within the education system and the professional environ-ment, which reinforced a fundamental sense of equality. Writing in 1997, Christiane Schenk, an activist of the feminist movement in the GDR, described the differences to everyday experiences in the united Germany in terms of hostility: 'In the GDR, gender relations were not experienced as antagonistic, not as hostile as it is the case now.'[66] In addition, within the GDR only a very limited number of scientists had access to relevant statistics. Inequalities were not common knowledge.[67] Thereby, women in the GDR were able to see men as partners and avoid the aggressive feminism that sprang up in West Germany.[68] Nevertheless, tensions existed and increased during the 1980s.

Within society, the double burden put a strain on many women and hindered their professional advancement. Their male partners still expected them, and in most cases women expected themselves, to look after the household and the children.[69] When problems occurred, those conflicts were either not discussed or women were depicted and per-ceived themselves as failures rather than blaming the social and political system. Gender equality was not a major issue in GDR society, neither for those women and men, who accepted the traditional lifestyle, nor for those looking for alternatives.[70]

According to Susanne Diemer, an authoritarian state built on patriar-chal structures would reproduce its fundamental paternalism in social attitudes and mechanisms: 'The authoritarian-bureaucratic power struc-tures of GDR society are based in the main on the mechanisms of patri-archy.'[71] Diemer's analysis of patriarchy in the GDR goes some way towards explaining the discrepancies between the apparently progres-sive official policy, and the realities of gender relations that put undue stress on women. The social benefits lavished on the female population, in particular young mothers were expensive, proved counterproductive to women's emancipation, and undermined work morale. Benefits such as the 'Haushaltstag' (housekeeping day) helped to encourage the same old stereotypes of women looking after the children and the household, which equal opportunity policies regarding education and professional development apparently aimed to reduce. Working practices and the organisational structures of most companies or institutions were geared towards the flexibility of the male manager, who had a wife to look after his home and family.[72] Therefore, the person in charge, often a man himself, preferred a male employee.[73] The father could apply for the so-called Baby Year, and from 1988 onwards also the housekeeping day, but would first need special permission and second have to suffer ridicule from his male colleagues.

Such circumstantial problems, however, were deepened by policies that were kept more secret than the social benefits handed out to mothers. The choice of professional careers open to women, for example, experienced some major adjustments over the years. Whilst the range of professions available was much expanded in the 1970s, by the 1980s it had been radically reduced because of the high female absence rate at the work place.[74] Hanna Behrend has shown the reduction of places for female apprentices within the electronic industry from the 1970s to the 1980s. In Berlin, lucrative apprenticeships for car mechanic were not available for young women at all in the 1980s, and the situation in Berlin tended to be slightly better than in other parts of the country. Here, the last apprenticeship for girls to become a mechanic was available in 1979.[75]

Furthermore, the special social benefits provided for mothers strengthened their dependency on the patriarchal state, as one study conducted by the ZIJ concluded in 1986.[76] This might help to explain why women showed noticeably more support for the state than men.[77] An analysis by Andre Hahn highlights the over-representation of both young people and men leaving the GDR in 1989.[78] The explanation, given for this prevalence of men in a study by Hilmer and Köhler, was the male tendency to accept risk more easily. However, Hahn has shown that the percentage of men leaving the GDR continued to rise even after the fall of the Wall, when it had become much safer to leave, reaching a maximum rate of 62.7% in January 1990. These percentages suggest that the difference in attitudes of men and women to the state would also have played an important role.

For the stability of the GDR it was essential to develop a strong bond, even dependency, between the female part of the population and the regime. Nevertheless, it is difficult to credit the policy makers with having developed this tactic solely with political stability in mind. Inge Lange from the 'Abteilung Frauen' committed her life trying to implement the policies that were meant to ensure gender equality. Repeatedly she demanded equal treatment and opportunities for women.[79] The Politburo was regularly informed on the current situation of women and knew of the shortcomings, especially regarding women's access to responsible positions within the economy and politics that were highlighted by all statistics. Honecker repeatedly gave speeches on the issue. In 1983, for example, he demanded the integration of women into higher management and in 1985 he called for their greater participation in the higher echelons of politics.[80]

This discrepancy between not only official policy but also official efforts to achieve gender equality and the lack of success on the

practical level can be explained by the state's fundamental patriarchy. Considering the society in which Honecker's generation grew up, patriarchal attitudes dominated both the social and the political sphere. The political system reflected this, as Irene Dölling has pointed out. She compared the General Secretary of the SED, Honecker, to a pater familias who spoke in the interest of everybody else protecting, but also directing them, in the process. The patriarchal principle then was duplicated, added to and stabilised in both practices and symbols of gender relations.[81]

Nevertheless, for East German women their own perceptions were more relevant to their self-understanding and behaviour than any unknown statistics. Within the citizen's movement of the 1980s, for example, women were as much represented as men and often occupied leadership positions within their specific groups. Names such as Bärbel Bohley, Vera Lengsfeld, and Ulrike Poppe bear witness to this. However, within the unified Germany, which did not provide the same progressive legal framework for gender equality, these women were less successful than their male equivalents in entering the political hierarchy on the national level. One specific case was the couple Ulrike and Gerd Poppe. Whilst Ulrike was much more active within the citizen's movement, it was Gerd Poppe who managed to enter the political system after unification. The existence of policies and structures to ensure the emancipation of women seems to have been at least partly successful in suppressing tensions. A psychological dimension and the importance of appearances became most apparent in relation to the question of gender equality.

Open conflict was rare within this social group but tensions were reflected to some extent in the number and content of petitions, women sent to responsible institutions such as the 'Abteilung Frauen', the DFD, and the 'Staatsrat' in the 1970s.[82] In particular young mothers made up a great percentage of petitioners. Of the 19,192 women who complained to the council of state between January and September 1977, 25% were young women, only a third of whom came from a working-class background, who complained mainly on the issue of housing.[83] The 'Abteilung Frauen' received fewer petitions, which between 1972 and 1974 declined noticeably in numbers (1972 (324), 1973 (188), 1974 (154)). Complaints concentrated on housing and labour law.[84] The numbers increased again between 1975 and 1976 from 157 to 197 petitions, declined to 137 in 1977 and 131 in 1978, and increased to 170 complaints in 1979.[85] Issues, however, stayed similar focusing primarily on housing, labour law, and childcare. Members of the working class

comprised about one-third of the petitioners.[86] In the analyses, rapid increases in petitions were explained with reference to new social policies introduced by the regime or expectations linked to specific events, such as party conferences of the SED.[87] The comparatively low number of complaints from working-class women and high numbers from white-collar workers and 'Intelligenz' responded directly to the composition of groups in the alternative women's movement. One MfS study from 1983 estimated that over 60% of women involved in the groups were either artists or employed by the Churches. The rest were students, members of the medical profession, housewives, and white-collar workers, but not members of the working class.[88] The social background, age, and education of women who were most active in these groups has not yet been researched in depth but the indication is that they were linked by an artistic and intellectual background, as was the case regarding the alternative scene in general.[89]

Although gender relations represented an issue that had an impact on the interaction between all groups and subcultures, it did not focus public discussion. However, female writers made it an issue in the 1970s, small groups of Christian women focused on gender inequality after the Ecumenical World Council's consultation on sexism in 1974, and the first women groups established themselves around the same time with lesbians leading the way in the early part of the decade. In 1988, the MfS listed fourteen 'noteworthy' groups within the alternative women's movement comprising an estimate of 150 permanent members in the age group twenty to thirty-five.[90] As Samirah Kenawi has pointed out, three distinct strands developed within the alternative women's movement in the GDR, which comprised many more groups than accounted for by the MfS.[91] First, the women's peace movement was sparked off by the new law on military service from 1982, which introduced the mobilisation of women in a military emergency. These groups existed within but also outside the Churches and the founding of 'Frauen für den Frieden' (Women for Peace) around Bärbel Bohley in Berlin was a first sign that gender relations was becoming an issue outside of groups concentrating on specific themes related to their socialisation. Second, women's groups within the Christian community began to include feminist working groups from the early 1980s onwards. Feminist theology was encouraged by international events such as the consultation in Sheffield in 1981 and developments within the US.[92] Finally, interest groups of the lesbian community within the GDR provided the third strand of the alternative women's movement.[93] A conflict situation had developed specifically in response to the regime's refusal to accept the

existence of homosexual lifestyles within the GDR. Thereby, the lesbian groups combined social criticism, feminism, and alternative lifestyles, probably harbouring the most radical responses to the regime within the women's movement.[94]

The GDR regime never entirely managed to change traditional gender stereotypes, which persisted within the East German population despite central policies devised to emancipate women. However, it has been suggested that the intentions of the regime were much less progressive than officially proclaimed.[95] The tensions that surrounded the issue had an impact on all sections of society.

GDR society showed a level of division, which undermined the ideological claims of equality and community. Whilst individual groups could be very close-knit, fear and suspicion were dominant with regard to outsiders. Both, the activities of the MfS and the tight ideological framework enforced by the regime were responsible for these aspects of East German society. In contrast, such social characteristics also showed the extent of mental independence among the population, which refused to apply every given official policy to their own lives. Instead most East Germans insisted on keeping attitudes that were based often enough on features that structure most societies: social tradition, prejudice towards minorities, discrimination of specific social groups but also a prioritisation of the private sphere. Such basic denominators of society continuously defied the claims of the socialist state.

State control

Social intervention was a favourite tool of the East German political elite. Although change in areas such as gender equality progressed only slowly and partially, the young generation that grew up in the 1970s and 1980s showed some adjustment to new social expectations. Younger men became increasingly involved in housework and childcare, while a significant number of young people found their way into the Churches and their youth programmes in the context of 'Offene Jugendarbeit'. In the 1970s, official policies regarding the equality of women, Christians and other minorities within society often seemed more progressive than both the efforts made in the localities to implement them and their lack of impact on every day life would warrant. This virtually gave Honecker and the other members of the Politburo the image of social reformers struggling against a society held back by outdated social traditions. Maybe this was how Honecker justified his position to himself.[96]

Within East German society, a varied and vibrant selection of social forces was at work, operating often outside of state control. The official part of GDR life might have been boring and lacking in fantasy but such an assessment ignores other layers of life that were equally relevant to many East Germans.[97] The regime encountered a complex situation when it tried to control and manage 'class' divisions. Concentrating on established writers, for example, it became increasingly difficult for the political elite to influence even those with little international recognition, as they were all made welcome in West Berlin and West Germany. Even younger writers, who were part of the Prenzlauer Berg scene and not even recognised as writers by the East German administrative bodies, were sought after by West German publishers. For the state, such an elusive social group was difficult to contain.

Privileges and, at least regarding the generations that had been born before 1945, ideological claims such as the anti-Fascist symbolism exploited by the political elite skilfully over decades, helped to bind writers to the regime.[98] In spite of the loyalty that the anti-Fascist myth inspired, the use of privileges, both material and political, had wider implications and enforced social divisions. The circumstances described above, created a complicated pattern of social forces working against each other. While privileges helped to bind writers to the political elite, they also undermined any attempt to integrate them into society. Propaganda claims of social equality were just as preposterous as its literary symbol, the 'Bitterfelder Weg' which turned out to be a public relations disaster that was quietly fazed out as soon as politically possible. As a result, the regime only succeeded in encouraging an intellectual elite that could barely be controlled. The political system was also undermined by the delight many writers took in outplaying censorship, by their increasing tendency to communicate with the West, and by their assumed role of mediators between the regime and the population. Furthermore, this new elite of literary intellectuals began to protect its own position in the 1970s, thereby hindering easy access of the younger generation. In relation to writers, social intervention produced additional tensions that, in the long term, destabilised the political system. Similar difficulties arose in other social groups and with regard to the position of Christians and the attempt to instil the population with atheism, the same problem occurred. The regime was unable to keep control of the changes it had initiated.

Atheistic education had been a success in the GDR. However, at the same time it had isolated the Christian communities sufficiently to make them attractive to other isolated groups and those wanting to

express their individuality. The Churches, and specifically the Protestant Churches, were used as alternative political institutions because their religious aspect had been taken apart almost entirely by atheistic concepts forced onto society after 1949. The anti-Christian feeling widespread among the population isolated both the Churches and the groups working within them. However, the same feeling prevented the groups that had found protection and space for their activities within the Churches from being contained within them. Honecker had hoped that the Churches would be able to control the groups. In 1983, the 'AG Kirchenfragen' stated that, as a result of an order from Honecker, it had been achieved: 'that this controversy [regarding political groups within the Churches] should not take place primarily between state and Churches but should increasingly be seen as an internal problem of the Church leaderships'.[99] The same report also highlighted the problems facing the Churches, which felt forced to work with the groups because they feared that otherwise they would become independent and thereby uncontrollable.[100] In the long term, neither the regime nor the Churches were able to contain the groups, which were breaking out from their isolation.

Some of the tensions that existed within and between the social groups and subgroups have been discussed earlier. The issues had been selected to stress that the GDR cannot be understood entirely by looking only at its official policies and political institutions. Quite to the contrary, East German society displayed aspects of independence based on social traditions that were not erased entirely by the regime, whether they represented progressive initiatives or not. The regime succeeded in changing the interactive relationships of East German society in as much as its policies encouraged resentment towards the political system within the social groups and the ineffective categorisation of society created social and cultural spaces. Although unintentional, the regime's strategies undermined the long-term stability of the political system by trying to redesign traditional social structures.

Implications

Social undercurrents turned East German society into a complex web of social forces, which the state was often unable to influence effectively. Regarding gender relations, for example, the state was unable to eradicate old stereotypes that categorised women primarily as wives and mothers. The patriarchal structures of the state were reproduced within social relations and were not overcome by official policy. Nevertheless,

women gained confidence from both the recognition and more immediate independence, which these policies seemed to provide. Furthermore, the members of the alternative scene, punks, neo-Nazis, homosexuals, women's groups, and others who expressed independent attitudes were not a danger to the state originally. The state turned them into potential dissidents by isolating them and not providing space for their activities. As a result, the political system undermined itself by refusing to integrate alternatives into society without destroying their identities in the process. In addition, the regime created more tensions by exploiting existing social problems to increase short-term support for the political system. The distribution of privileges to the intellectual elite, for example, had both positive and negative results. By giving established writers, and apparently loyal young writers, the opportunity to travel outside the communist bloc and by allowing some of them direct access to the political elite, the state was quite successful in creating the illusion of participation. Even with hindsight more than a decade after the GDR collapsed, giving writers a stake in creating a better society, or an illusion thereof, probably was the method most likely to bind intellectuals to the regime. However, it created new social divisions, which isolated the privileged from a resentful public. It also meant that intellectuals grew to overestimate their own importance and tried to get involved in politics not only as mediators between state and population, but also between the socialist system and the Western democracies. A similarly two-sided affair was the treatment of Christians and the isolation of the Churches within East German society. Whilst preventing the Churches from gaining political influence, it also encouraged the exclusion of well-structured institutions and their members from socialist society. Furthermore, the political space that was allowed to exist almost outside the regime provided other isolated groups with a meeting point that became a safe haven for dissidents. The anti-Christian feeling that had been successfully encouraged by the state among the majority of the population only helped these groups in using the Protestant Churches as political tools. The damage done to the stability of the system could be seen in 1988 and 1989 when isolations broke down, the tensions began to focus on the state, and complaints came to dominate public opinion. The state simply collapsed.

Based on the centralised network of political institutions and central policies, the regime was in a position to attempt social intervention. However, the inadequacies of the political system and the resulting diversity of society, both of which have been discussed in previous chapters, hindered the regime's efforts to fundamentally change society.

Tensions continued to shape the internal dynamic of East German society, specifically social divisions, the generational conflict, the survival of traditional gender roles, and the problems surrounding the position of Christians. While Chapter 5 has been concerned with tensions and instability within East German society, the following chapters will focus on aspects that stabilised the system. In particular, the issue of participation will be discussed to highlight the importance of mutuality within the relationship of population and state in the GDR.[101] Cultural, social, and political participation constituted a key aspect of life in the GDR, which helped to create loyalty to the regime but also forced the political elite to take account of society's expectations. In Chapters 6 and 7 the stabilising effect of communication and compromises will be analysed to highlight this participatory aspect of GDR society.

6
Communication within GDR Society

So far, the analysis of East German society has focused on policies and institutions, thereby giving much attention to the regime's activities and interests. It has been shown how realities in the GDR differed from the official view, although the status and attitudes of social groups were strongly affected by central intervention. Conflicts have been analysed to show the high level of political, social, and cultural diversity within the GDR, which however did not endanger the political system. In Chapters 6 and 7, the discussion will concentrate on aspects that highlight the population's willingness to participate in the socialist dictatorship, and also the mutual dependency of regime and society. The following will address the question of popular support for the regime, and its relevance to the social and political stability of the GDR in the 1970s and 1980s.[1] This support was reflected primarily in the use the population made of the existing lines of communication. Particularly within the Christian community, writers, and the citizens' movement, the interest in communication was growing in the 1980s when economic, social, and political tensions were increasing rapidly.[2]

Tensions between regime and society were plentiful. They concerned such diverse areas as political structures, indoctrination of the population and especially of children, economic problems and consumerism, social security, media policy, travel, and the attitude towards the Churches.[3] Furthermore, basic routines such as shopping presented a major problem and could involve hour-long queuing and searching for the required goods. Accommodation continued to present a problem up to 1989, in spite of the government's efforts to provide more and better housing. Divorced couples and new partners might be forced to live together in one tiny flat for months before being allocated separate apartments.[4] To a mother searching for fresh fruit and vegetables for her

children, small, everyday problems were of more immediate importance than the fundamental ones such as the undemocratic election process. In addition, most of the conflicts were not discussed in public. Due to centralisation and the SED's dominance, problems in any area automatically reflected badly on the regime. However, there was a general awareness of the issues in the public domain. In the late 1970s in particular, both international and domestic events challenged the regime to employ new political strategies to take account of a growing public sphere. Communication constituted a major problem in this context.

Communication

Communication was a crucial political tool used by the regime to monitor social, cultural, and political developments. In addition, it facilitated the population's participation in the state. An aspect of East German society was the withdrawal described by Gaus's concept of niche society.[5] However, equally important was most people's keen interest in domestic developments that was based on a general conviction that everybody had the right and duty to express criticism, unless it concerned fundamental ideological tenets. As indicated in previous chapters, some sections of society and some elevated individuals were in a better position to voice such criticism, especially if it touched on political issues. Nevertheless, every citizen was able to raise questions linked to general social provisions, the realisation of official policy, and the work of institutions, if necessary even with the General Secretary of the SED.[6] Lines of communication existed and were used extensively.[7]

Both the breadth and importance of political criticism can be traced in political jibes, often with reference to major political figures. Honecker in particular attracted much ridicule, but specific issues such as media and travel policy featured equally prominently, as the following example shows:

> A man from Dresden took his courage in his hands and went to the police station: 'I want to leave the country.' The police officer asks him: 'Where do you want to go then, young man?' 'To the GDR.' He answers. 'But you are already here.' The officer is astonished. 'No, no.' the man doesn't give up. 'At long last, I want to move to the GDR, which is described in the newspaper.'[8]

Attacking two political issues of great interest to the population, this dialogue reflects the typical East German way of dealing with

authority: pretending harmless opinions, making fun of the regime, and expressing serious criticisms at the same time. Such alternative statements of political opinions were common in the GDR. They give an impression of public opinion and the high levels of interest accorded to political developments.

Similarly, many official policies were rendered meaningless by the blasé attitude of the population, which was applied in particular to reading, watching, and listening to Western media. In 1987, for example, a woman from the Soviet Union who was working as an assistant at the AdW complained to Kurt Hager about her department. Apparently, throughout their working day her colleagues were listening to the West German radio station *RIAS*, according to the MfS a stronghold of enemy propaganda. When the assistant complained within the academy, she was ostracised by her department. Neither the SED members nor the party secretary were prepared to back her in discussions with the commission investigating the problem. In the end, even after complaining to Hager, she was forced to change employment.[9] This remarkable incident occurred in 1987. The fact that the whole department including the SED secretary thought it acceptable to listen to 'enemy' broadcasts on a regular basis, showed a casual attitude typical for the Honecker era.

The decline in the attention given by the population to propaganda was a general phenomenon in GDR society. Even those people who aimed for a political career would not necessarily be able to explain or understand the meaning and aim of some fundamental Marxist–Leninist phrases and concepts. The ZIJ noted in many of its studies that the generation that was growing up in the 1970s and 1980s showed a falling interest in the ideological aspects of living in a socialist state. Many increasingly resented being indoctrinated on a regular basis when their real life experiences did not match the analyses and promises made by the papers, politicians, and teachers.[10] Moreover, the FDJ whose task it was to bring up future communists was not known for dealing effectively with young people's requirements and questions.[11] Although it should have been the organisation's foremost concern to attract young people to the concept of socialism, the FDJ often failed to understand their needs. The ZR FDJ did not automatically receive copies of ZIJ studies, although the results would have been very relevant to its work.[12] By 1989, the communication problem between the state and the population affected the GDR to such an extent that great parts of the population felt able to sever the links to their state quite easily. The disillusionment was spreading among all parts of society and reflected the tensions which underlay society. Life in the GDR was a matter of having

to compromise with given structures. In the last instance, any complaint potentially contained political criticism because the state was based on a central structure that focused any tension on the political centre. Tensions had to be managed in order to ensure the stability of the political system.

The state had different methods and institutions to deal with tensions. The efforts of mass organisations, the various parties, and smaller organisations such as the SV were all directed towards enabling the SED to reach all parts of society. Their function as transmission belts also obliged them to deal with tensions resulting from state policies. In fact, the DFD, the FDJ or parties such as the CDU were often the first port of call for petitions ('Eingaben') from the specific social groups within their political reach. The content of the petitions sent to these organisations and institutions was essentially the same as those sent directly to Honecker or the 'Staatsrat', with a great percentage pertaining to housing, work or educational problems. In some cases, political questions such as travel to countries outside the communist bloc featured quite strongly. The MfV, the SV, and the CDU, for example, were confronted with such demands on a regular basis.[13] Petitions in particular were employed to accommodate communication.

Managing conflicts

It needs to be established whether attempts were made to overcome or resolve fundamental conflicts that arose between the state and the population. Lines of communication existed and were used, but not necessarily effectively. Both the collection of information and specific systems and institutions that were reacting to problems were less successful in their work than it seemed at the time. In particular, the need to fulfil a plan and to present positive results put much pressure on these institutions to conceal negative aspects. The 'Institut für Meinungsforschung', for example, was closed in 1979 and this served as a warning to other similar bodies. In its last years, it had identified an increasingly negative attitude among the population.[14] Within research institutes, the accusation of taking a 'negative' approach was a lethal weapon in the hands of functionaries, as Herta Kuhrig pointed out with regard to the work of the 'Wissenschaftlicher Beirat für Frauen in der sozialistischen Gesellschaft' from the late 1970s onwards:

> Later, there was no more openness and when research reports were presented; it was terrible when the practice proved unequal to the

theory and when it did not express gratefulness for the socio-political benefits that had been achieved. It was horrible – they only accepted it, if it agreed with preconceived opinions, a situation that was aggravated, up to disputes regarding the matter itself.[15]

Political pressure successfully suppressed the awareness of fundamental problems, especially in relation to gender equality. In other cases, the political elite used information for their own political purposes, as Modrow has pointed out with reference to the relationship between the local SED politicians and the political elite in Berlin.[16] In contrast, the findings of the 'Institut für Meinungsforschung' and the ZIJ, for example, had little or no influence on the policy makers at the centre of political power.[17] By rejecting all results that suggested fundamental political problems existed in the GDR, communications were seriously impeded. Furthermore, the growing disillusionment of the population prevented many from voicing criticism, which made it difficult for almost all institutions to reflect accurately people's attitudes and opinions.[18]

The collection of information was, however a central part of the work of most GDR institutions. The state was in fact obsessed with data, statistical or otherwise. The state saw this approach as the only way to manage all areas of life, economic, social, and political. Unfortunately, at least for the regime, the sheer volume of data that was amassed every year made analyses difficult and lead to flawed conclusions. When any action was taken on the basis of the information it was often ineffective. The problems encountered in the economic sector show most directly the shortcomings of centralisation.

In the planned economy, a plan, usually covering five years, outlined production, expected income and expenditure including building of accommodation blocks, social policy expenses, but also import and export of goods and debt requirement. This method was used by the SED to safeguard its position. Party members occupied the decisive positions within the economic system and ensured that decisions of the government had to be approved by the party leadership. The monopoly on information was exploited extensively in this context. Decisions were not made with a view to profits or benefits from a product but based on a centrally recognised deficiency. Naturally, this system was extremely inflexible as there was no way of knowing precisely at the beginning of a plan period what would be needed, how much of it, and how or where a specific product would be used. There was no room for innovation, risk taking, or competition. One other side effect, besides declining

quality and deficiencies encouraged by irrational price fixing, was the development of a huge bureaucracy that suffered from information overload. From the 1970s onwards, the 'Zentralverwaltung für Statistik', the central administrative body for statistics, produced 250 reports every month with *c.* 200,000 data blocs on topics such as export, modernisation, and salaries. These were prepared from the monthly reports of the factories. Every factory had to provide up to 8000 such data blocs every month. The expenditure in time and resources was enormous especially as computer technology was very limited at the time. Furthermore, to stay on top of the incoming information it had to be condensed dramatically. State statistics lost vital detailed information and therefore produced a picture that was accurate in mathematical terms but did not reflect reality.[19] At the same time, statistics were exploited in the power struggle between local general directors of factories and the central institutions.

Another instance of the political exploitation of statistics was to be found in the Statistical Yearbooks of the GDR which recorded the demographic, economic, and social developments within the country. The problem caused by the development of social classes in a way adverse to ideological expectations, for example, was concealed by the use of broad categories.[20] The effective analysis of information was undermined by both the impossibility of analysing such amounts of data with the technology available to the GDR at the time and the political implications of any statistical data or information.

Judging by the amount of information available to various institutions, the state had systems and methods in place that had the potential to accommodate an effective dialogue with the population. The many people who wrote petitions or were informers for the MfS created an immense pool of information, with the help of which the regime was able to stabilise the political system. The motivations of those who worked for the MfS, including prominent figures such as Heiner Müller were manifold. However, many explained their activities as an attempt to communicate with the state. Müller was particularly outspoken about his relationship to the MfS, which provided him with an illusion of control:

> I tried to give advice and influence things because, from a certain point onwards, it became impossible to talk sensibly with party functionaries, especially in the last years. And then it was possible to talk sensibly with Stasi officers because they had more information and knew more about the real situation than party functionaries.[21]

Müller's assessment of the situation indicates both a general wish to improve an apparently difficult situation and the perception that the MfS was the only institution that might be able to solve fundamental problems. Furthermore, a conviction that as an individual he was able to contribute to the rescue of the GDR is reflected in his statement. In a similar way, both individuals and groups used petitions trying to establish a dialogue with the political elite. Much of the work of the groups within the citizens' movement was the attempt to achieve recognition from the state. At least in part, they hoped to do this through petitions.[22] The activities of the 'Friedenswerkstatt' (workshop for peace) in the mid-1980s, for example, stood at the centre of an initiative to encourage the Churches to take a political stance. After the Chernobyl disaster, they started a campaign of petitions to induce public discussion, a tactic which the 'Staatssekretär für Kirchenfragen' took very seriously, as indicated by an analysis of these activities from October 1986:

> A political goal is connected with this, namely to present themselves as an authentic agency of the Churches' independency, to put under pressure, in a more coordinated and more efficient manner, loyal and realistic forces in committees of the Church leadership and to force themselves onto the state as a partner in the discussion of politically difficult issues.[23]

Functionaries refused to respond to such attempts that aimed to establish an effective dialogue.[24] Nevertheless, political, social, and cultural leeway was carved out by exploiting the state's desire to hide and ignore problems. Tensions were dealt with but underlying causes were not resolved. The petitions system in particular highlights this limitation.

The petition system

For some of the problems that occurred on a regular basis in the GDR, the regime could be criticised relatively openly. This happened mostly in the form of petitions sent by members of the public to state institutions, mass organisations or other bodies with relevant responsibilities. Petitions featured strongly among the various forms of information and data that the state collected and analysed.[25] During the 1970s and 1980s, a great number of people sought to communicate problems experienced by them in their daily lives to those higher up in the political hierarchy. The council of state alone dealt with over 840,000 petitions between 1979 and 1988.[26] In 1975, a new law governing petitions

enhanced, in theory, their importance by demanding that they were answered and that receiving bodies analysed them regularly.[27] However, the way in which petitions were handled by the various organisations slowly deteriorated between the early 1970s and the late 1980s, partly as an unintended consequence of the law of 1975. The requirement to respond to a petition either orally or in writing within four weeks overburdened the system. It was increasingly unable to deal with the sheer numbers of petitions that were received, with the effect that the political value of petitions was reduced dramatically by their interpretation as reflections of individual not general problems.[28] With time, it became rare for specifics to be mentioned. In the end, all that seemed to matter was that the petition had been dealt with in some way and could be ticked off the task list.[29] Steffen H. Elsner has described the petition system as a stabilising tool within the GDR but also indicated the importance of petitions with regard to accommodating dialogue between the political hierarchy and the population.[30] During the last decade in particular, the petition system worked to hide problems and to clamp down on suggestions that fundamental problems might exist within the socialist state. Thereby, even data that were collected and interpreted objectively had little impact on the regime.

A large proportion of petitions concerned social and economic questions such as working conditions, housing, childcare arrangements, and the allocation of apprenticeship or university places.[31] They were dealt with efficiently if the issues involved were part of the state's official policy or could be defended by an argument pertaining to the socialist cause. Social security expectations or drawing attention to the decisions of a communal institution that were not in line with official policy were arguments that could be employed with positive results. In 1977, for example, some women working in agriculture complained to the state council that the new social policies regarding the 40-hour week for women with more than one child or additional holidays for shift workers had not been implemented in rural areas. In quick reaction to this complaint, the local politicians were forced to comply with these aspects of social policy by incorporating relevant statutes governing work within agriculture.[32] In many cases non-political petitions or petitions by individuals or families were resolved in the interest of the complaining party.[33] Comments on one analysis of petitions to the MfV in the second half of 1987 concluded that 30–60% of petitions were decided in the interest of the complaining party. This, in the opinion of the commentator, indicated serious shortcomings within the management of educational bodies and a lack of knowledge regarding the law among

decision makers.[34] It also highlighted the many variations in the application of central policies that were caused by decisions of individuals.

This apparently unambiguous system had its drawbacks. Margot Honecker, for example, quite simply refused to react to petitions which representatives of the Churches or individual Christians had sent: 'Similarly, letters addressed to the Ministry [for people's education], which raise fundamental questions regarding the upbringing and education of young people and which come from within the Churches, are not answered by principle. They were not petitions but attempts to interfere in problems of the education system.'[35] These petitions, many of which concerned discrimination against Christians within the education system, reflected the importance of the issue to the Christian community throughout the 1970s and 1980s. Margot Honecker's refusal to deal with such petitions highlighted both the isolated position of Christians within the GDR and ongoing discrimination. However, the minister's attitude also showed the negative influence individual members of the political elite could exercise with regard to the implementation of state policies. Her behaviour went entirely against official policy that tried to assure Christians of their equal treatment in all areas of society and hoped to integrate rather than alienate. The 'Staatssekretär für Kirchenfragen', who received from the MfV some of the rejected petitions on individual cases, repeatedly criticised the minister's behaviour in this respect. It hindered the task of finding ways to communicate and deal with the Churches in order to contain them more effectively, as Hans Wilke pointed out in 1986: 'It seems to me that this is an area that can create disquiet and insecurity at the grassroots level. We should answer these questions.'[36] This situation came to a head in spring 1989 after the MfV invited the population to comment on and make suggestions regarding the education system in preparation for the Pedagogic Congress that was due to take place in summer 1989. On various occasions between April and July 1989, both Kurt Löffler and Margot Honecker refused to react to, or even to acknowledge, proposals sent in by the BEK in June 1989 and by the Protestant Church in Berlin-Brandenburg in April 1989.[37] At this stage even the MfS got involved in what was essentially a communication breakdown.[38] The relationship between the state and the Churches was always particularly complex as individual functionaries on all levels of the political structure were able to adjust official policies according to their own convictions. Thereby, they made constructive communication between the regime and the population difficult and increased tensions to an unnecessary degree.

For those who complained to one of the political bodies and who were interested in finding a quick solution rather than attracting the attention of the MfS, it was of the utmost importance to avoid criticising state structures or policies. Furthermore, the authorities sometimes reacted negatively when a group of people complained together as this gave the impression of organised and possibly large-scale criticism directed at the state rather than addressing a single issue that could be resolved on an individual basis without wider consequences. Attempts to make petitions public caused even greater suspicion.[39] Anyone trying to put petitions into the public sphere took on a political role which would attract immediate attention from the MfS. Jochen Staadt has described such an incident, when the satirical magazine *Eulenspiegel* ran an article based on a petition that had not been dealt with efficiently by the responsible body. As a result of this initiative, the editorial board of the magazine encountered many problems including the dismissal of the editor in charge at the time of the incident.[40] Problems that had political implications were discussed fervently but not openly.

Most of the petitions from the general population outlined individual experiences which the petitioner had judged safe to be pronounced before the state. Misjudging the permissible limits could cause considerable upheaval and pressure, as one woman experienced after writing to the DFD in 1986 regarding the new social benefits that had been introduced at the XI Party Conference.[41] The response to her letter made her feel like an enemy of the state as she explained in a letter to Ilse Thiele, the long-standing president of the DFD, in 1989:

> In the end, I felt the whole situation not to be an open discussion anymore but I felt treated as an enemy of the state, who is trying to undermine the government. The problems became inessential, were in parts misunderstood and talked down by the representative of the Frauenkommission. I personally was accused of not just talking for myself but for many women. To know that I wasn't allowed to do that, I have not been given sufficient political schooling.[42]

Explaining why it took her so long to write this final letter, she indicated that cynicism regarding the petition system was widespread among the population: 'This letter should have been written some time ago but, as so many other citizens in similar situations, I had resigned myself to the circumstances.'[43] The petition system was an important line of communication between the state and the population. To some extent, it reassured both sides of an illusionary stability by having at least the

trappings of 'dialogue'. However, structural flaws prevented it from functioning effectively. In addition, neither the political elite nor the petitioners were willing and able to use it to its full potential. Once it became apparent that the various lines of communication would not be sufficient to affect economic, social, or political reforms for some activists the Protestant Churches became an alternative way, although not an easy one, of communicating the need for change to those higher up the political ladder.[44]

Petitions from Christians and Christian groups

When speaking of the general population in the previous part of this chapter, one important part of GDR society was excluded because this social group behaved differently when petitioning the state and its institutions. In turn, it received different, less accommodating responses. Christians and representatives of the Churches were treated as a separate class of people in this regard. However, bodies whose special responsibility it was to deal with Christians, such as the 'Staatssekretär für Kirchenfragen' and the CDU, made an effort to prevent discrimination.

Petitions from Protestant Christians in particular showed a tendency to be more political than those sent in by other sections of society. When complaining about a specific incident often a more general political complaint was linked to the petition.[45] One analysis of petitions sent to the MfV in 1978 noted the many petitions sent by intellectuals and members of the professional middle class ('Angestellte und Handwerker') seeking redress for the discrimination their children had experienced when applying for places in higher education. During the same period, 101 petitions were received from people with a Christian background on the general issue of military education in schools.[46] The Christian approach in this case was less concerned with the individual problem and more with the fundamental issue. Perhaps Christians were more aware of the political background to problems because of the discrimination they experienced on a regular basis. In most cases, parishes had links to Churches in Western Germany or other countries outside the Communist bloc that gave them a wider perspective and fostered comparisons.[47] Furthermore, they were living within Christian communities linked to the more democratic system of the Protestant Churches which encouraged both a public spirit and outspokenness to an extent that was difficult to find among the rest of the population. Some Christian groups used the petition system specifically to advance their political agenda.[48]

The 'Staatssekretär für Kirchenfragen' and the CDU received most of these petitions. They dealt with them in the same way as other institutions did; individual problems were handled quickly and fundamental questions were avoided.[49] However, the CDU decided to state the percentage of petitions referring to political and ideological questions, a method not used by any other institution.[50] In spite of some individual successes, the petition system was ineffective, as Cardinal Meissner pointed out in 1988, when he demanded a public enquiry to deal with fundamental issues that were of concern to both Christians and the society as a whole.[51]

During an extensive research of petitions recorded in the files of the SAPMO archive, which had been sent to various mass organisation, party and government institutions, the lack of petitions criticising the regime was remarkable.[52] This tendency changed only in 1989 and then not with regard to all agencies that received such petitions. The MfV was one of those that from spring 1989 onwards had to deal with strong political criticism, often from the Christian community, pertaining to both the general election and the planned Pedagogic Congress.[53] However, throughout the 1970s and 1980s most of the petitions gave little indication of the political tensions that by 1989, apparently, were widespread among the population. The system of petitions only functioned in part as a line of communication; more importantly, it provided the state with a political tool that could be used to create an illusion of stability and strength. It only partly served the citizens, who tried persistently to communicate to the state some of the problems they experienced in their daily lives. While responsible institutions found individual solutions, fundamental problems were not addressed. However, neither side was in a position to challenge the petition system to fulfil its political potential. The political implications would have been too far-reaching for this to be allowed to happen.

The Ministry for State Security

The MfS was another major agency that was crucial to the management of conflicts within the GDR. First, the ministry collected great amounts of information on the domestic situation, which reflected quite accurately the political developments throughout the 1970s and 1980s.[54] However, it also showed a strong tendency to look for political reasons behind every activity and to interpret youth culture, for example, in terms of political warfare rather than allowing for concepts such as generational conflict. Only a few officers of the MfS, in the middle of the

1980s, started to recognise the lack of oppositional political intention that defined most young people's lives: 'Too quickly, questions that are really unclear or false attitudes of the learning are interpreted as provocations or similar. In contrast to this, the Churches respond to all questions and problems of young people, who therefore feel themselves drawn to them.'[55] In the late 1970s, a change in the attitude of young people, who the MfS described as 'negative-decadent', was recorded, from being politically uninterested to expressing a strong resentment towards the indoctrination that had been increased since the early 1970s. Furthermore, the lack of ideology-free space was suffocating independent youth culture.[56] The MfS files demonstrate the many insights this institution was able to get from spying extensively on its own population. At least some of the research done by MfS officers as part of their work or when preparing a more academic analysis at the Law School in Potsdam, reflected tensions that existed within society. Nevertheless, the MfS never managed to understand the extent of these problems. Neither was it able to locate the reasons for criticism firmly within the structure of the socialist state itself. In the opinion of the MfS, it was always the enemy outside the Communist Bloc who masterminded political and ideological diversions (PID).[57] In effect, such interpretational limitations rendered almost useless the data that were being collected by the MfS. Inadvertently, additional tensions were created by a strategy of denial and suspicion. At the same time, the state was creating conditions for underground activity by preventing criticisms from being expressed openly. The space offered by the Churches allowed these suppressed tensions to be aired in small groups if not publicly. Structural shortcomings of the MfS contributed to this problem.

Structure

The information collected by the MfS was not only amazingly rich, but also insightful.[58] This ministry was an institution that controlled all others. Only regarding the SED were its powers limited. It was founded in February 1950 and although it was in theory subordinate to the council of ministers, it received orders directly from the leadership of the SED. The MfS was in a position to give orders to other ministries. As Otto Nuschke explained in 1952, the MfS constituted 'eine Behörde eigener Verantwortung', an institution answerable only to itself.[59] Deputy minister from 1950 to 1953 and from 1955 to 1957, Erich Mielke occupied the post of Minister for Security from 1957 to 1989, by which time he was 82 years old. In 1958, he was elected Member of Parliament and,

under Honecker, he became a member of the Politburo in 1976. The additional political power that he acquired after Honecker's succession reflected the increased importance of the ministry within the political system, which was also borne out by the expansion of the MfS in the early 1970s. While in 1973 the MfS officially employed 52,700 people on a full-time basis, this number rose to 75,100 in 1980 and probably about 100,000 by 1989. In addition, the MfS used many thousands of the infamous unofficial collaborators, the IMs, about 173,000 in 1988. The number of IMs fluctuated year on year. To take one example, in 1989 the MfS recruited in the district of Rostock 619 new IMs of which about 10% were women and 6% were young people under eighteen years of age. In the same year and area 636 IMs ceased to be used by the MfS.[60] The influence of the MfS can be measured by its extensive network of collaborators.

The MfS concerned itself with general secret service tasks such as espionage and counter-espionage, prevention of terrorism and the security of the GDR's national borders. Because of the GDR's exposed position within the Cold War context, those efforts were mostly directed against West Germany. In 1954, however, a new major department, the HA V, responsible for espionage within the GDR, was formed. This department, renamed HA XX ten years later and last led by Paul Kienberg, became the centre of the MfS which increasingly focused on the control of its own state's population. Even Markus Wolf, until 1987 in charge of espionage, described the HA XX as 'the real centre of the Ministry for State Security'. It was subordinated to Rudi Mittig, a deputy of Mielke and member of the ZK SED.[61] The HA XX was divided into various subordinate departments that concentrated on controlling specific sections of society. The HA XX/7 was created in June 1969 and focused its activities on the cultural sector. The HA XX/2 was responsible for controlling youth and the HA XX/4, led by Joachim Wiegand, was in charge of collecting information on the Christian community. The latter constituted the qualitatively and quantitatively best-equipped institution compared to other government and party bodies dealing with Church policy. Increasingly, HA XX/4 prepared policies and drafted speeches within the Church political context and worked closely with the 'Arbeitsgruppe Kirchenfragen' within the ZK SED, without ever appearing on the political stage.[62] The MfS, however, repeatedly initiated bills in all social and political areas.[63]

With regard to women, no specific department existed within the MfS. Dissident activities involving women, especially women's groups and individuals such as Bärbel Bohley and Vera Lengsfeld, were dealt

with within other departments. Information on activities of women's groups was drawn together by the central information department of HA XX, its 'Auswertungs-und Kontrollgruppe' (AKG), or the 'Zentrale Auswertungs-und Informationsgruppe' (ZAIG).[64] Women employed by the MfS, like those who were spied on, were often treated disparagingly and were not given the same career chances as men.[65] In some cases, the MfS files suggest an unsatisfactory love life as a possible cause for dissident activity. In 1994, Bettina Wegner, who had been an active member of the citizens' movement, described her assessment through the MfS: 'To them, we were stupid. For this that I mocked myself in this state, I wasn't responsible. According to the Stasi, I always had the wrong men.'[66] This condescending attitude towards women entirely misjudged the importance of women to the developments of the 1980s. Preconceived ideas and even prejudice constituted a major drawback, which persistently undermined the work of the MfS.

The role of the MfS as the institution which not only knew most about the activities of individuals and groups within the GDR but also influenced both state policy and its implementation is crucial to the understanding of the institutional framework as a whole. In particular, its direct impact on and control of all aspects of society in the GDR seems at least as remarkable as its apparent overall lack of success. The MfS' failure to prevent the happenings of 1989, however, had much to do with the shortcomings of the political apparatus, which enabled and even encouraged individuals to dominate politics. Mielke in particular made some fatal decisions during the 1970s. In particular, his view of all independent organisations such as peace and environmental groups as enemies of the state constituted a misjudgement of the situation. Similarly, the rough treatment of controversial individuals, proved to have been a dangerous mistake. With regard to Biermann specifically, the Minister of Culture admitted as much in November 1989.[67] During the 1970s and especially during the 1980s, the MfS had been successfully collecting data relating to all areas of life in the GDR. The work of the MfS was undermined not by lack of interesting information but by the interpretation applied to the available material. The information overload prevented more specific action by the MfS, a tendency reinforced by the state's reluctance to use this institution more forcefully.

In the 1980s, the MfS was constantly reacting to developments within society. It showed itself unable to take the initiative outright. In fact its primary assignment was to observe and react to accumulated information.[68] Many of the documents and most of the academic works produced at the Law School in Potsdam referred to the need for more

information.[69] By fulfilling its purpose, the MfS became a line of communication that was constantly and deeply interested in the activities of the population, although with the specific aim of keeping the political hierarchy informed.

Accumulation of data

The density and quality of the material which the MfS was able to accumulate over the years was high. The statistics and analyses on issues such as juvenile delinquency contained interesting insights, and the reactions to the problem showed an extent of social awareness that might seem surprising for an institution such as the MfS. In particular, the analytical work undertaken by MfS officers at the Law School in Potsdam resulted, in spite of notable exceptions, in a realistic assessment of the general situation within the country and inspired useful suggestions on how to deal with tensions.[70] These analyses were at least partly translated into the practical work of the MfS either through training courses which would use the methods and suggestions developed in an academic setting to train officers, or by developing handouts on specific subjects such as youth groups.[71] Often recommendations were made to provide better facilities for young people and to improve the work of the FDJ, which was criticised repeatedly for being out of touch with the needs and interests of youth in the GDR. Rehabilitation rather than condemnation came up often after offences had been committed, and the MfS ensured that many different agencies, such as schools, the FDJ, and local youth departments were involved in the process. One concern of the MfS was to reintegrate those young people into society, who had fallen foul of the system.[72] A similar concern to integrate rather than alienate was expressed with regard to the cultural intelligentsia and Christians.[73]

The work of the MfS was primarily to locate and control the enemy within and outside the GDR. As part of this, many people experienced outright repression that in some cases destroyed entire lives. Young people who were suspected by the MfS of oppositional activity while, in fact, they were just being young and perhaps naive, found the methods of this institution extremely frightening but also enlightening in the sense that they understood more clearly, and were repelled by, the nature of the state that had created it.[74]

Furthermore, the extent and detail to which the MfS was informed on activities within the various Churches, and the groups that sheltered within the Protestant Churches, has given a glimpse of the breadth and

depth of material available to this institution.[75] The ministry filed extensive reports on conversations, on structural arrangements, and on a wide range of activities within the youth population, within the Churches, within the various groups that would eventually become a base for the citizens' movement of the late 1980s, within factories, within the SV, and within the PEN – the MfS collected information within any organisation or grouping or on any individuals it pleased.[76] More importantly, it reacted to this material on various levels.

The reactions of the MfS to the insights gained into GDR society were manifold. Specific responses to individual issues would always include the demand for further information and better reports from an increased number of people collecting information for the MfS.[77] Building on the amassed information, the MfS proceeded to undermine and dissolve groupings that were deemed dangerous. In the case of the citizens' movement, this would often happen by infiltration or by more public attempts to challenge the reasoning powers of the groups. From September 1983 onwards, for example, the group 'Friedenskreis Pankow', of which Vera Lengsfeld was a leading member, regularly received a number of uninvited guests to their discussions. These thirty students of the Law School in Potsdam were part of the attempt by the MfS to undermine the group by both openly arguing against its criticisms and by disrupting the discussions.[78] Intimidation was the main aim in this case. Later on, rumours were spread to undermine the standing of various members, including that of Vera Lengsfeld.[79] Notwithstanding this, other groups became bolder in their actions as they noticed that the MfS was not living up entirely to its terrifying image.

The reasons for this unexpected backwardness of the MfS included the international standing Honecker had worked so hard for during the 1970s, and which would have been threatened if the state was seen to act too forcefully against its own population. The position of the Churches improved dramatically under Honecker because of their international connections. Already in 1975, the MfS changed its strategy by adopting a more subtle approach to suit Honecker's policies, as one officer highlighted when discussing the treatment of young Christians:

> When new files are compiled, it is not of primary importance to get the suspects imprisoned, as there is no 'Kirchenkampf' taking place in the GDR and reactionary and clerical forces would immediately exploit such measures for new provocations.[80]

The relatively strong position of the Churches in this relationship is reflected in the officers' argument, which contained a reference to the infamous 'Kirchenkampf'. In addition, the threat of another 1953 and the example of Poland throughout the 1980s kept a tight rein on the ambitions of the Politburo. Finally, the belief of the political elite and especially Honecker that they were fighting for the common good and for a better future probably remained with them to the end.[81] Although this might seem cynical to those who suffered under this dictatorship, the socialist ideal was still part of the political and social make-up of this state even and especially in 1989. The MfS remained a political tool in the hand of Honecker throughout the 1970s and 1980s.[82]

However, communications were strong enough to convince at least some people that negotiation with the MfS was possible. The IM 'Karin Lenz', for example, hoped to improve the political situation by spying on her friends.[83] The controversial activities of personalities such as Manfred Stolpe or Hermann Kant, who worked with the MfS showed the possibility of accepting this institution as a body with which one could have a discussion. Furthermore, Stolpe apparently believed that he was able to use his conversations with officers of the MfS to the advantage of the Protestant Churches, in the same way as Kant considered his dealings with the MfS to be in the interest of the SV.[84] Furthermore, one theory has been that the MfS specifically targeted members of the SED who had shown critical tendencies. Often, by turning them into agents, their critical potential was contained most effectually.[85] For some, working with the MfS, and therefore within the system, was the most useful way of ensuring change. In fact, the influence of the MfS reached very high in the political hierarchy. Erich Mielke was part of the Politburo and officers of the MfS had access to all state institutions. Anybody working within such an institution and all members of the SED had to cooperate with the MfS. Moreover, the MfS was responsible for most of the information supplied to state departments such as the office of the 'Staatssekretär für Kirchenfragen', and in crucial areas, its officers worked together with the relevant departments to devise policy.[86]

Although this situation cannot be described as a dialogue based on equal input, exchange and open discussion, the MfS was in a position to collect great amounts of information and reacted to it at different levels. At least in specific cases, such as Church policy, the MfS influenced policy-making. Furthermore, the institution had access to all parts of society including high-powered political players. The MfS was probably the one institution in the GDR with the clearest picture of the true nature of East German society. However, the success of the MfS was

seriously limited by ideological constraints that encouraged one-sided interpretations and harsh reactions. The existence of a group within the MfS that expressed critical tendencies, the 'Brotvögel', showed both the understanding of the problems in society that was possible from within the institution and its limitations. Their existence reflected, in fact, developments within society and used similar methods to address the conflicts of lives in the GDR, such as songs and jokes that made fun of political situations. Their motto was: 'With Blues and Jazz against frustration and stress'. It indicated the generally harmless nature of their activities although on one occasion they were found to have helped refurbish a house owned by a writer who was under surveillance by the MfS.[87] The 'Brotvögel' were not an oppositional group but some of the members were removed very quickly from their posts, for example with the help of proceedings against party members that were based on bogus claims.[88]

Consequently, the MfS did not foresee the events that unfolded in 1989.[89] At a meeting on 31 August 1989, Mielke criticised the work of the IMs: 'Ears have gone deaf or aren't long enough.'[90] This was a remarkable admission of failure and the recognition of a fundamental change in society. It had become much more difficult for the MfS to collect crucial material. Had the population or the groups become more adept at hiding opinions and activities or had IMs begun to turn away from their employers as it became clear that nothing would change under Honecker? The IM 'Karin Lenz', for example, deliberately uncovered her identity to the group she had been spying on in June 1989.[91] Parts of the population became politically active after the general elections in May of that year. A fundamental change was taking place. Mielke finally noticed that something was seriously wrong when thousands of people kept leaving the GDR: 'This is not an isolated mass, which is leaving, it is part of the population, and it is leaving from within the population.'[92] His recognition of the impending crisis was followed by an attack on the political leadership of the SED when he criticised the lack of initiative shown by the party: 'What is this supposed to mean: the party is everywhere? If it doesn't even notice that next to us somebody is sitting, who is leaving and wants to leave. Such questions cannot be regulated and solved by administrative methods or orders.'[93] Conveniently, he excluded himself from this criticism, even though his ministry was responsible for alerting the Politburo to the build-up of tensions that was about to explode. In spite of all the information available to the MfS, Mielke had not been able to notice the crucial mood swing among the population. This failure reflected

the structural flaws of the MfS, an institution based on an inflexible ideological approach that was only able to blame the enemy and not the shortcomings of the state. Nevertheless, within its limitations the MfS had been able over the decades to deal with a dissatisfied population and stabilise the regime. The MfS created a limited but important channel of communication through the work of the IMs, its access to state and party institutions, and the influence at the higher political level. This exchange, however, broke down in 1989, rendering the MfS both helpless and useless.

Conclusion

Tools for communication were put in place by the state but not used to resolve problems and conflicts. The structure greatly favoured individual complaints or problems and made it easy to ignore or dismiss more profound conflicts that required reforms. The positive effect of the existence of a modus operandi should not, however, be underestimated as it allowed the regime to survive until 1989. The state tried to resolve problems by patching up established structures and policies without showing any willingness to introduce reforms.

The development of tensions during the 1970s and 1980s indicated that a fundamental change was taking place. In the 1970s there was a general preoccupation with international issues, on the final separation from West Germany in the form of the Basic Treaty, the arms race that threatened nuclear war in the late 1970s, and the oil crises. The difficulties of the late 1970s in particular, touched the political, economic, and cultural sectors. Nevertheless, in the mid-1980s awareness of tension among the population turned towards specific questions of domestic policy that surfaced repeatedly. Issues such as travel restrictions, freedom of opinion, social benefits, and the continuing economic difficulties were crucial to the stability of the state and could not have been changed easily without potentially undermining the entire political set-up. By 1989, the tension derived from only a few but very specific problems.

Lines of communication were limited in their effect but they existed and fulfilled successfully the important task of stabilising the dictatorship over many years. Furthermore, parts of the population continuously tried to overcome the communication barriers that were established in the last years of the GDR's existence. The utilisation of existing lines of communication reflected a fundamental willingness to participate in the political system. Without this participation, the

regime would have been unable to ensure the stability of the state during the 1970s and 1980s. In addition, between the regime and various social groups a number of working compromises developed, which will be discussed in Chapter 7. These compromises were based on both the limitations of the regime and the increasing differentiation within society. Furthermore, they highlighted the ordinariness of this society, which depended on the participation of the social groups. None of the current historical models that have been applied to the GDR account adequately for this mutual interest in the state's stability.

7
Compromises and Participation

Chapter 7 will utilise the previous discussion of communication within East German society to explore the background and implications of working compromises in the GDR. In this context, the interplay of Albert O. Hirschmann's concepts of 'exit' and 'voice' will be discussed in order to highlight the extent of the four social groups' participation in the regime.[1] Compromises made by the state in response to demands and complaints of social groups were crucial to the stability of the GDR. They became especially important under Honecker. They depended on the relative strength of the political position of a social group, or in other words, on a group's ability to make its voice heard. This more often than not depended on the groups' international connections, although channels of communication existed and were used.[2] Thereby, groups such as writers and the Christian community were most successful in negotiating and maintaining compromises with the regime. This dependency was based on these social groups' enhanced level of opportunity to exit or, equally effective, refuse to exit the GDR. In the long term, such compromises were unable to solve fundamental problems. However, only the developments after 1987 destroyed the socialist state, which had based its authority on the control of both 'exit' and 'voice'.

Exit and voice

Hirschmann developed the concepts of exit and voice in 1970, linking it to firms, organisations, and states.[3] While initially 'exit' and 'voice' had been depicted as functioning with the tendency to undermine each other, in relation to the GDR and after considering opposing views expressed primarily by Detlef Pollack, Hirschmann explored the reciprocity of these forces in East German history.[4] In essence, Hirschmann

concluded that the possibility to exit the GDR, which became most apparent in summer 1989, encouraged those who stayed to voice their demands. Similarly, he depicts the crucial demonstration on 15 January 1989 in Leipzig as dominated by those who wanted to leave the GDR.[5] Thereby, he ignores the primary importance of 'voice'.

The January 1989 demonstration in Leipzig followed an attempted demonstration one year earlier by members of the citizen's movement. Furthermore, preceding the demonstration in 1989, leaflets were distributed calling for the people of Leipzig to demonstrate for freedom of opinion, of assembly and a free media, not for the right to leave the country.[6] Hirschmann's focus on exit does not account for the developments between 1987 and 1989, which prepared the way for the explosion of tension in late 1989 and which was based on an increased restriction of 'voice': the raid on the 'Umweltbibliothek', a library collecting and distributing information on environmental issues, in a Berlin parish in November 1987, the imprisonment of dissidents in January 1988, and the withdrawal of the *Sputnik* magazine in November 1988.[7] The public outcry that followed the latter expressed the population's extreme disappointment and anger. The FDJ reported an unusual outspokenness of young people:

> The trust in the rightness of this decision is – even among young SED members – minimal. As a result of this administrative decision, these young people feel incapacitated in their right to develop their own opinions and judgements. They are asking, if the population is now to be isolated from every criticism or other statement, which is not in line with 'official comments'.[8]

Political tension had begun to build up after Hager's comments in April 1987, which compared Gorbachev's reforms to papering walls: 'By the way, would you feel obliged to re-decorate your flat, if your neighbour is re-decorating?'[9] The reaction from the population was cynical but also angry, as the writer Günther Deicke witnessed on 10 April 1987: 'Those young workers in the factories are reading it out to each other and are laughing about it – it is a very malicious laughter.'[10] At the same time, the growing citizens' movement was breaking through its isolation. The Olof Palme peace march in September 1987, for example, provided a first crucial opportunity for dissidents to take part in a public demonstration with their own banners. The positive reaction of the general population to their expressions of 'voice' encouraged many.[11] Other sections of society were also beginning to openly criticise political

structures and shortcomings. Participating writers at the conference of the SV in November 1987 discussed the politically very sensitive issue of the environment extensively, and Christa Wolf demanded that the SV should try and contact the writers that had been excluded from the union in 1979, of which four were still living in the GDR.[12] Going back even further to the late 1970s and the 1980s, the forced exits of Bahro and Biermann had been preceded by a strong use of voice. In addition, many writers left in the late 1970s and early 1980s only when the restriction of their literary and political voices became intolerable. The groups within and outside the Churches were characterised by their attempt to voice criticisms, only some parts were intent entirely on leaving the GDR.[13] In addition, Hirschmann's appraisal of dissidents within the GDR as 'a narrow band of reform-minded communists that had remained inside the party' cannot be accepted as he ignores not only representatives of the Churches such as Rainer Eppelmann and Friedrich Schorlemmer, but also leading members of the citizens' movement such as Vera Lengsfeld, Bärbel Bohley, Wolfgang Templin, Ulrike and Gerd Poppe.[14] A limited possibility to voice criticisms and to communicate with the regime was accommodated by the petition system and the MfS. It constituted a crucial aspect of East German society, which was also reflected in various working compromises that will be explored in the following sections. Finally, Hirschmann's discussion of 'exit' and 'voice' also failed to discuss the different levels of both interest and risk involved in either activity for specific social groups. In 1989, the possibility of 'exit' was probably more relevant to the average East German citizen, who had had little or no chance to leave the Communist Bloc than to the writer, who had been able to travel to Western countries for some time.

The power to grant permission to leave the country, or to force those who did not want to leave, to go, was a double-edged sword in the hands of the regime, especially as different social groups were exposed to it in varying degrees. However, it worked temporarily in favour of stability within the GDR. Within the GDR, various forms of exit existed. Prominent personalities would often be allowed to live outside the GDR for many years while still retaining their East German citizenship. These long-term visas were used to reduce the build-up of dissent among the literary community, although it was a controversial method.[15] Leaving the GDR entirely was not difficult either for important artists. Between 1976 and 1989, the SV alone lost over thirty authors.[16] Although this privilege might not have made it any easier to express a critical opinion, the case of Reiner Kunze showed that quite clearly, it made political criticism more of an option.

Within the Christian community, mostly higher-ranking representatives enjoyed a similar situation to the writing community. They had significantly better access to information regarding international developments through their many connections to the Western world and in particular to the EKD. They were also more often able to travel outside the Eastern Bloc because of their links to other Churches and ecumenical institutions.[17] Furthermore, the obvious difficulties for Christians and their families within an atheist dictatorship were for some counterbalanced by the belief that God had put them there, in the GDR, for a purpose. The leadership of the Churches certainly encouraged their members to stay in the GDR, even controversial personalities such as Eppelmann.[18]

Under Honecker, the state slowly improved the situation for Christians, especially within the education system. In particular, children of pastors became increasingly likely to go on to higher education and were even overrepresented at EOS institutions in the 1980s.[19] In some cases, they experienced outright favouritism as one note in the department for Church questions of the CDU showed. In 1985, a pastor asked if his son, who was waiting for heart surgery, could receive surgery at an earlier date than planned, as his chances of survival would otherwise have been very low. In response, the department noted that special arrangements had been made before in similar cases:

> Exchanges of appointments are certainly possible, if superior departments give appropriate orders. In similar cases, advantage has been taken of the possibility to use hospitals in other countries or West Berlin.[20]

In these circumstances, exit became a less straightforward answer to the problems encountered by Christians in the GDR. As with other social groups, the possibility to leave had a specific and important function as an outlet for political pressure and social hardship. Nevertheless, the state's use of this compromise was limited, as those people whom the political elite would have liked to see leave tended to insist on staying.[21]

In contrast, for the general population attempting to leave the GDR could entail long-term harassment, prison, and perhaps the loss of life. In spite of the progress made by the Conference for Security and Cooperation in Europe, leaving was not an easy option for the majority. Nevertheless, releases took place with an exceptionally big wave in 1984 when 40,900 people were allowed to leave the country (1982: 13,200, 1983: 11,300, 1985: 24,900).[22] The decision to ease restrictions was

designed to reduce the critical potential within the population. However, far from achieving an easing of tensions, it seemed to increase the hope of others, who had not even considered applying beforehand. Among the political developments of the late 1980s, what had been meant as a compromise quickly turned into a disaster, particularly as the hundreds of thousands of people who left the GDR in 1989 included a great number of young people.[23] Women, in contrast, were underrepresented.[24] With regard to the general population, leaving the GDR was not a compromise in the sense applicable to elite groups. For the state, it had the function of controlling tensions while the majority of the people in the GDR did not consider exit to be a real possibility until the summer of 1989. Other compromises were of more immediate relevance for the general population.

'Einheit von Wirtschafts- und Sozialpolitik'

The first and most dramatic compromise introduced by Honecker, and the change that affected most people almost immediately was the improvement of the standard of living in the GDR. This bribe was quite successful in encouraging the majority of the population to accept the feeling of social, economic but also emotional safety offered by father state.

The concept of 'Geborgenheit' was extremely important to the citizens of the GDR. In surveys, they often defined their home country by this characteristic and separated it quite distinctly from West Germany by stressing the issue of social security. Already in 1973, a survey conducted among teachers on behalf of the MfV noted social security as the primary characteristic of the GDR. Freedom was mentioned only as the seventh characteristic. In comparison, the teachers thought that for the FRG freedom came first and democracy second. This was a controversial result, although 96% of the teachers insisted that they preferred the social conditions in the GDR.[25] The clear differentiation in favour of the social security experienced in the GDR can partly be linked to propaganda, which continuously stressed unemployment figures in West Germany. Nevertheless, the recognition of the GDR as a country that provided social security for almost all of its people was both in line with the priorities of the political elite and an important integrating factor for the population in the 1970s. The regime relied on this compromise to find a greater political legitimacy with the help of soft stabilisation measures.[26] The optimism resulting from this new approach was great and especially young people were able to build up enthusiasm for the socialist idea.[27]

Unemployment in particular was an area where the state preferred to invent jobs rather than not employ somebody, much to the displeasure of those charged with establishing a viable economy. The state was willing to provide not only an extended social security system but also to improve social provisions continuously until the late 1980s when the economy finally started to collapse under the burden of the scheme. Furthermore, Honecker's softer approach entailed ideological compromises in the form of credits accepted from capitalist states. In addition, Honecker's consumerist bribe contradicted the high morality of the communist cause, which called for sacrifices and restraint rather than immediate comfort. In the years that followed the initial success of the 'Einheit von Wirtschafts- und Sozialpolitik', Honecker was never able to retract these compromises. They had strengthened his political appeal in the 1970s and helped to keep a great part of the population content until the mid-1980s but they also undermined the GDR in the long term, both economically and politically.

Throughout the 1980s, many different statements, surveys, and documents indicate how important social security was for the majority of people in the GDR. It provided the state with a measure of political legitimacy.[28] It was a reason for the population to accept major shortcomings of the state and helped make life in the dictatorship liveable. In 1982, the 'Abteilung Volksbildung' informed Hager of attitudes and opinions in the education sector. Like the survey of 1973, the report stressed the general recognition among the population that the state was offering social security to all parts of society.[29] Teachers from various educational institutions expressed their hopes, which included the wish to import more products from West Germany and their fears, which questioned the viability of both the economic aims and the extensive social security system.[30] The expression of these fears and hopes that contradicted official expectations suggests a certain reliability of the source. Furthermore, it gives an impression of the population's priorities regarding life in the GDR. High expectations combined with strong doubts as to whether the regime could deliver all that it had promised shaped the attitude to the state. The crux of the problem that confronted the political elite in the 1980s was this combination of hope and disappointment. It marked policy-making and was reflected in both the petitions and the information collected by the MfS.[31] Government agencies, the various parties, and mass organisations often and repeatedly used the argument of social security to legitimise both their own position and the positions of the regime to the population. In particular organisations such as the DFD, that showed little primary initiative,

liked to fall back on this argument of 'Geborgenheit' and did so at every opportunity, certainly in all reports on official and ritualised events, for example annual meetings and elections.[32] However, the political task of organisations such as the DFD, the FDGB, the FDJ or the parties included a strong social element as they tried to integrate their specific target groups into the given social and political system.

Social security proved a generally convincing argument during the early 1970s but started to lose its appeal as people got used to expecting it as a given.[33] In a perhaps ironic twist, Christians with their generally greater access to information from Western democracies continued to appreciate the achievement of the social policies implemented by Honecker while great parts of the population who were not able to travel outside the Eastern Bloc or receive West German newspapers increasingly misjudged and undervalued the level of social provisions in the GDR. In 1985, the president of the synod in Saxony concluded that people were often not aware anymore of the importance of social security because they had been experiencing it for a long time:

> He had spoken repeatedly and in front of religious people here in the GDR about his impressions [in West Germany]. Some didn't want to believe him, when, for example, he talked about the effect of VAT, about unemployed parish priests and vicars or about employees of the Churches, who were demonstrating against their dismissal. Such experiences had helped him to realise to what extent the Churches participate in our state's social security and social policy.[34]

This short extract also goes some way towards explaining the tendency of those who travelled outside the Eastern Bloc, whether they were Church functionaries, intellectuals or politicians, to stay in the country in spite of the political problems they might have experienced. They had often more knowledge of the social shortcomings of the Western democracies and in 1989 it was those parts of society who tried the hardest to prevent unification.[35]

Even in the second half of the 1980s, surveys and statements indicated a continuing understanding and appreciation of the social security that was available to the population. It has been argued that women and mothers benefited the most from the 'Geborgenheit' offered to them and their families and often showed a greater dependence on the state than the male population.[36] The social security system helped to shape the mentality of East German women, as it allowed them to become more independently minded while not feeling the need to fight

the opposite gender: 'I do not live in constant fear of being pushed aside by men, and do not have to prove to myself or others how emancipated I am.'[37] This independent attitude also entailed aspects that were perhaps less gratifying but also gave an indication of gender relations in the GDR. According to a localised study carried out in the GDR in 1975 just as many women as men admitted to sexual encounters with partners outside their marriage.[38] The 'Einheit von Wirtschafts- und Sozialpolitik' gave real benefits to women allowing them to make more individual choices regarding family and career. Honecker's willingness to compromise on ideological grounds by improving social security and living standards enabled great parts of the population to accept the dictatorial regime without halting political tension.[39]

In an attempt to win the loyalty of the young generation, the state had made various provisions specifically for them. These ranged from preferred treatment in the allocation of accommodation for young families to work groups that encouraged young people with a special talent. Rock concerts were laid on in recognition of the different interests of the young and fashion specifically for young people was produced. Furthermore, young people were treated more considerately than adults with regard to their political attitude and behaviour. In most cases, they were given the benefit of the doubt when they stepped outside the ideological framework. Even the work of the MfS was defined by hope for their rehabilitation. The existence of these provisions and benefits had a positive influence on young people's loyalty to the state.[40]

However, surveys taken in 1987 and 1989 also recorded increased tension and criticism. Young people's relations with the FDJ were at low ebb. In a survey from 1987, students, including members and candidates of the SED, described the mass organisation 'as an apparatus far away from their everyday lives, an institution for ensuring mass events; disruptive of the study routine'.[41] Furthermore, the ZIJ noted a worrying decline in interest for and participation in political education. In 1984, 34% of young people up to the age of nineteen took part in organised political education programmes, whilst 49% showed neither interest in nor participated in them. The survey for 1987 recorded only a participation rate of 16% with 62% of those young people asked declaring no interest and no participation. Furthermore, 75% of the men stated neither interest nor participation. The FDJ was unable to make any organisational progress among those living in the countryside: in 1984, 40% of those asked denied the existence of a FDJ group in their area and 20% had not heard of their local FDJ groups. Apprentices displayed similar signs of alienation especially with regard to the FDJ and political

education.[42] In 1989, a collaborator of the ZIJ, Harry Müller, expressed concern regarding the reversal of young people's identity building as citizens of the GDR.[43] At that time, issues such as social security, family, anti-fascism, peace issues, and even the realisation of human rights still had a positive impact on this process. In contrast, the environmental issue, media policy, and lack of provisions for leisure pursuits undermined loyalty. In line with other parts of society, young people also criticised shortcomings in the economic sector, limitations of democratic participation, and a low standard of living. The younger members of society complained surprisingly strongly about interpersonal relations in the GDR.[44] In addition to highlighting the generational gap and individualisation processes, these results indicated the increase in 'Geborgenheitsfrust', a resentment of the restrictive social policy of the state, which the young generation was beginning to feel.[45]

Young people in particular felt frustrated by their very limited career choices, disillusioned with the much-praised concept of continuity which meant continuous employment in the same factory until retirement for the average citizen. The provision of social security could not compensate for the lack of opportunity to be different. Although there was little danger of failing if one kept within the structures provided, no incentives encouraged attempts to be individual and to be successful as an individual. 'Geborgenheit' increasingly became a word that implied boredom and state control for young people. In 1989, 46% of the total number of people leaving the GDR was under 26 years old. This only continued a trend, as a growing number of young people had been emigrating from 1984 onwards.[46] A similar assessment of social security as a limiting force emerged from a study carried out in 1989 at the Karl-Marx University in preparation of the XII SED Party Conference. This material concluded that too much social security was encouraging repetition and mediocrity in the cultural sector.[47] It also noted criticism regarding the state's restrictive attitude to cultural media as an ideological weapon, which prevented it from taking on more complex social tasks.[48] The MfS also had access to a study conducted at the beginning of 1989 which was based on research in various state-owned firms and combines and recognised major problems: 'An increasing number of workers do not accept without limitation anymore our view of socialism as a historically necessary and socially desirable alternative to capitalism.'[49] The general approval was flanked by new demands for 'new opportunities for self-determination and exerting democratic influence for individuals'.[50] At the same time, resignation was growing towards the various shortcomings in the economic sector and workers' reluctance to

keep up productivity. Comparisons between the propagated achieve-
ments of the GDR and their practical realisation were made, and the lack
of incentives to increase productivity was criticised. Workers began to
concentrate more on their own needs and interests, increasingly leaving
the concept of the socialist community behind.[51]

Throughout the 1970s and up to the late 1980s, the 'Einheit von
Wirtschafts- und Sozialpolitik' helped to integrate great parts of the pop-
ulation, in particular women and to some extent young people, into the
socialist society. The political and ideological compromise which this
new strategy involved was slightly adjusted in the later part of the 1970s
when political tension was rising again but it could never entirely be
taken back. The concentration on consumerism and improved relations
with the West changed both the political outlook of the GDR and life
within the socialist system. The compromise made life more liveable but
also encouraged comparisons between West and East Germany and
introduced new priorities that lay outside the communist cause.
Working compromises became most apparent in social groups that con-
tained an element of choice: Writers and Christians. They represented
problem areas which required particular attention from the state. The
state's willingness to compromise in this context was encouraged by
these groups' international connections, which in turn ensured their
ability to exit the GDR if necessary.

'No taboos' for the cultural elite

In December 1971, at the 4th plenary session of the ZK of the SED,
Honecker announced that art and literature would not be confronted
with any taboos as long as they kept within the socialist framework. This
statement was greeted enthusiastically. Until about 1976, the 'no taboos'
statement was taken as an indication of a change in cultural and even
political policy. Volker Braun expressed his optimism in the following
words, which stressed in particular the newness of the approach:
'The existence of our society is not bound to taboos: That's new. Yes, this
society can only continue to exist and to develop, if it gives up its
taboos, meaning if it moves itself rigorously.'[52] During the early 1970s,
the cultural sector certainly had more scope. Plenzdorf's *Die neuen Leiden
des Jungen W.*, for example was published and staged. It became a great
success with the young generation and the state did not intervene
in spite of the controversial issues Plenzdorf addressed in style and
content.[53] In 1973, Reiner Kunze was able to publish his anthology *brief
mit blauem siegel*. Furthermore, between 1974 and 1977 the state and in

particular the MfS allowed meetings between authors from West and East Germany to take place in private flats on a regular basis, about four times every year.[54] Critical discussions were also possible within the framework of musical–literary events such as the series 'Eintopp' and 'Kramladen', presented by Bettina Wegener and Klaus Schlesinger in the 'Haus der Jungen Talente' between 1974 and 1975.[55] In November 1974, Stefan Heym even demanded an end to censorship at a meeting of the Berlin branch of the SV and was supported in this motion by Schlesinger, Plenzdorf, and others. This action had no direct political repercussions.[56] The possibilities and opportunities for the literary community to discuss, criticise, and work on controversial issues were available to a greater extent during this time. They were also exploited more. Both the state and the literary intelligentsia were trying out what would be admissible.

The project *Berliner Geschichten* and its eventual rejection reflected both this period of experimentation and its end in 1976. In 1974, a group of writers including Ulrich Plenzdorf began an anthology of short stories, which they wanted to publish on their own without going through the usual state-controlled channels. In fact, they were trying to avoid censorship and, as a report from the MfS put it, test the 'no taboo' promise:

> Two of the authors, who are linked to the anthology, mentioned independently from each other that they were sure that the project included a 'danger of confrontation and anger'. This, however, was to be understood, as the anthology was meant as a test-balloon: It is meant to test [Prüfstein] if taboos had really been eradicated.[57]

As a result, one year after the start of the project, the MfS recommended the prevention of this initiative.[58] When the anthology was finally banned at the beginning of 1976, many of its stories were read at privately organised readings and inspired various cultural and political initiatives.[59] The cultural activities that were possible in the early 1970s gave orientation to many future political activists. Wolfgang Rüddenklau and Carlo Jordan, the future founders of the environmental movement, for example, took part in events organised by parts of the cultural intelligentsia.[60]

With 1976, the experimentation period came to a sudden end as the political elite felt increasingly threatened by the developments in the cultural sector. The IX SED Party Conference was a turning point. Although it still radiated some optimism, little was done to develop

a concept that would enable the state to deal with the tensions that were beginning to build up and that could not be addressed successfully by repression.[61] In 1977, Konrad Wolf, then President of the Academy of Arts, criticised the attempt by the political elite to reverse the compromises that had been made during the 'no taboos' phase and even threatened his own resignation.[62]

The 'no taboos' period was an important compromise in cultural policy. Although the postscript put Honecker's statement firmly within the socialist framework, during the early years much was achieved within the cultural sector that seemed to support the promise of a more flexible approach. This period also encouraged the cultural elite to take on a more political role within the GDR, as they felt a responsibility for this state. Jurek Becker described it in simple words that have been repeatedly echoed by writers such as Christa Wolf: 'Here, I live, here I want to see something changed.'[63] It was a time of experimentation, as neither side was entirely sure of the boundaries. During this crucial period loyalties were also forged. From 1976 onwards, however, the political backlash put pressure on the relationship between state and literary community.

The Prenzlauer Berg concept

Writers who were working outside the establishment were in an ambivalent position after 1976. Although the MfS worked harder at creating new files and recording every activity within the cultural sector, the tension of the situation and the many initiatives that originated from young writers eventually convinced the political elite that they needed to open up new publishing opportunities. Three events triggered this re-conceptualisation. First, the Biermann affair, which affected the younger generation of writers such as Lutz Rathenow and the students at Jena University in particular, had highlighted the growing alienation of this specific group of writers.[64] Second, in 1979 the *Weimarer Beiträge* published a discussion with young writers, including Uwe Kolbe, who commented sharply on the situation and attitude of young people in the GDR.[65] More specifically, those young writers rejected the traditional Marxist understanding of the role of literature. During the discussion, Stephen Ernst pointed out:

> Literature is a kind of opposition. [...] She is resistance firstly to adults, to school, later also ideologically [...] Literature needs a specific consciousness of insufficiency as resistance to its environment, also to

political conceptions and, if you like, also to Marxist philosophy, let's say: to a collective taking over.[66]

Although GDR critics tried to moderate and integrate into socialist tradition the views expressed during this discussion, their publication in *Weimarer Beiträge* caused much agitation amidst both the cultural and political elite, especially as students of the Institute for Literature in Leipzig had participated in the discussion.[67] As a result, the institute was strongly advised to concentrate more on its political work with young authors, even to the extent of neglecting the literary aspect of its courses. In 1980, Uwe Kolbe, who had been one of the most outspoken participants of the discussion, was invited to attend a one-year course at the literary institute. Katja Lange-Müller was accepted for a three-year course at the institute in 1979. On grounds of her political outspoken-ness, she was surprised to be offered this course.[68] Such educational privileges were part of a developing strategy that tried to integrate potential troublemakers into established structures. In contrast, in 1980 and 1981, with support from Franz Fühmann a small group of young writers, including Uwe Kolbe and Sascha Anderson, began an initiative to publish an anthology within the AdK. If successful, this approach, similar to the project *Berliner Geschichten*, would have broken the publication barrier for the young generation of writers and avoided censorship at the same time.[69] The project was, however, prohibited by the ZK SED in November 1981. Throughout this time, the tactic employed by the MfS was to break up the group of young writers and recruit some of them into the establishment by either offering them a membership in the SV, sending them on projects outside the GDR, or providing them with mentors.[70] For about a year the MfS considered sending Uwe Kolbe to Yemen or Angola but this journey did not take place.[71] Katja Lange-Müller spent one year in Ulan-Bator ostensibly studying modern literature in Mongolia but was actually working in a carpet factory.[72] In addition to such drastic measures, the Politburo decided to start analysing the work of young authors more 'scientifically'.[73]

Young authors began to receive more attention from both the cultural and the political establishment. The authorities seemed to be looking for a new generation of writers to continue the socialist tradition of writing and many were given a first opportunity to publish.[74] This was an improvement from the early 1970s, when the responsible institutions had largely ignored this section of society. Increased concern created a growing desire to influence and control potential talents more effectively. Especially in the early 1980s, various initiatives from the MfS, the

MfK, and the 'Abteilung Kultur' were aimed at introducing new ways of supporting but also organising this specific subgroup. Their methods included courses specifically aimed at young talents but also a pronounced politicisation of the courses offered by the Institute of Literature, especially from 1982 onwards.[75] One direct response by the MfS to the *AdK-Anthologie* had been the introduction of literary centres in every administrative district ('Bezirk'). These were specifically designed to attract writers who were working outside schemes set up by the FDJ, the SV or the 'Kulturbund'.[76] MfS involvement made the benefits and compromises offered to those writers a rather more sinister choice. Benefits were directly linked to control, as in the case of the 'Zentrum Junger Autoren' or with regard to stipends: 'Precondition must be that such stipends contain concrete, controllable and accountable terms and conditions for the parties to the contract.'[77] In addition, between 1979 and 1982, the MfS tried to introduce the law for the protection of the professional term 'writer'. This scheme was designed to control people who had so far avoided both full-time jobs and membership in the SV.[78] If implemented, it would have criminalised the alternative cultural scene that was developing in major cities such as Dresden, Leipzig, and Berlin. Although the project was never realised, it marked a point in time at which the Prenzlauer Berg scene was rapidly developing as a centre of alternative cultural activity. It allowed such important figures as Bert Papenfuss-Gorek to work outside the establishment without being entirely isolated from other talented people. Furthermore, the very existence of an alternative scene in the capital of the GDR known to many on both sides of the border was a crucial achievement. The regime's reluctant acceptance of the Prenzlauer Berg concept allowed activities to develop outside the general cultural establishment. With time the alternative scenes began to overlap with the establishment and to influence other writers.[79]

The deliberate circumvention of politics was characteristic for the Prenzlauer Berg scene, although the pronounced apolitical stance contained strong dissident tendencies. However, even an apolitical attitude was a political statement within the GDR context, as the lyricist Barbara Köhler indicated when referring to the attitude of the alternative cultural scenes that existed in the GDR as:

> […] a possibility not to get involved in a marking rivalry, which also produces negative copies. Therefore, it was crucial not to accept this dictum, which results from the rivalry. I don't think that this is apolitical. This is also a political attitude.[80]

Furthermore, its exploration of individualism in a society defined by collectivism, forced participants to the fringes of East German society. They were isolated by the MfS but also by their own agenda of cultural objection.[81] The Weimar Punk Band *Schleimkeim* succinctly expressed the propensity to both condemn and reject in the lyrics: 'For a long time already, I have not been ashamed anymore / for my homeland GDR.'[82] Although some links and even overlaps existed between the established literary community and the alternative scene, their extent was limited and marked by suspicion on both sides.

The importance of the Prenzlauer Berg scene lay in its existence as a sector that was not structured by the state and that fostered independent creativity.[83] Furthermore, the Samizdat literature that emerged from the Prenzlauer Berg scene encouraged and supported the developing citizens' movement by helping to create a public sphere.[84] The Prenzlauer Berg concept was a compromise that helped to integrate young writers but also allowed individuals to develop their creativity away from political constraints. In some cases, it prepared the exit from the GDR, in others it made it possible to stay.

The lure of the establishment

In the majority of cases, poetry should not be taken as single-issue political statements. However, in the GDR much was written that was intended by the author to be interpreted in a political way.[85] Writers such as Christa Wolf, Franz Fühmann, Stefan Heym, Sarah Kirsch, Irmtraud Morgner, Uwe Kolbe and many others were quite intent on taking on the role of the centrally controlled media and they did that in poems such as *Das Lehen* by Volker Braun.[86] This approach to literature does not take anything away from the texts' complexity and wider ranging associations and interpretations. These writers were shaped in their attitudes and behaviour by their lives in a dictatorship, drew inspiration from and commented on it continuously.[87] They accepted the threat of MfS attention and persecution in order to speak to the public on the issues that they thought relevant to society as a whole. These issues often had political implications. Heym's *König David Bericht* (1972) and Wolf's *Kassandra* (1983), Braun's *Hinze-Kunze Roman* (1985) and Morgner's novels would lose one crucial dimension if read without consideration of the GDR background.[88] Uwe Kolbe, as many others, repeatedly commented on this aspect in his literary work, as in *Kontext*: 'Is it not mentioned, he thinks, whilst the water is cooling down, is the wall not mentioned anywhere by an author, who lives in this city, then he is

lying.'[89] The privileges offered to established writers or those willing to enter the establishment with all its pressures and political demands were a major integrative tool used by the political elite to keep prominent people in the GDR.[90] They also sustained the hope that reform might be possible. Helga Königsdorfer explained the complexities of this attitude in 1991:

> We did not accept it, this system, which surrounded us but we loved the utopian dream that once it had espoused. And we had the hope that we could reach it somehow … We wanted to shake up the system in order to change it but not give up the country on which our utopian dream had been based. The more painful the difference between dream and reality became, the stronger became the obligation to get involved. Exactly this suffering became the source of our work, in which sadness increased, hardly any high spirits anymore. And this sorrow we communicated to our readers. Not only the function as a substitute, which literature had, explains its role in this country but exactly this link.[91]

Writers' opportunities to get involved were a crucial feature of their position in the GDR.[92] This compromise was at least partly forced onto the political elite by the international standing of writers such as Christa Wolf. The willingness of the political elite to accommodate was reflected in this ambiguous situation, which helped to integrate at least some and, in the eyes of the political elite, probably the most important writers of the GDR. In contrast, the position of an outsider was maintained if not strengthened by the compromises reached between the Churches and the regime from the 1970s onwards.

The privilege of the outsider

Honecker needed to establish a working relationship with the Churches if he wanted to improve the GDR's international standing. The alienating measures applied under Ulbricht forced the Churches to similar conclusions. The creation of the BEK in 1969 was one compromise that was based on this experience.[93] The controversial formula 'Kirche im Sozialismus' (Church within socialism), pronounced in July 1971 in Eisenach, continued this approach of adjusting to circumstances without necessarily expressing acceptance or approval or giving up the right to defend the Christian community within the GDR: 'The declaration of belief in socialism was not crucial but the declaration to be willing to

live and pronounce our Christian belief in this place.'[94] This new strategy was a crucial step towards improved relations that would eventually grant Protestant Christians an easier life in the GDR. It encouraged the political elite to offer compromises that allowed the Protestant Churches to protect their members.

The regime was never able to turn the Churches into a state church. The similarities to the Third Reich would have been too obvious. This situation allowed the Protestant Churches to maintain their democratic structures, which made it difficult for the regime to control them and their members effectively. One example was the following situation, whereby the state secretary tried to silence the often outspoken Bishop Fränkel in 1973:

> The church leadership has noted factual contradictions between the state's interpretation of Fränkel's speech and its real content. Between both, there exists a grave dissimilarity, and for this reason the church leadership is unable to distance itself from this paper. In legal terms, it is not possible to prevent Bishop Fränkel to appear publicly in Saxony in any case. Only in the event of heresy would the church leadership be able to act against it and apply disciplinary measures. In addition, the voluntary nature of the parishes stands against such a ban.[95]

This kind of argument, which in most cases defeated entirely any attempts of the state secretary to control the Protestant Churches and to silence the criticism continuously voiced by their representatives, was a regular occurrence throughout the 1970s and 1980s. Discussions with regard to specific critical people such as Fränkel or Eppelmann, or in relation to controversial events went on over years without achieving the objectives of the state. During the 1980s, this aspect of state–Church relations was used extensively by the Churches to accommodate both the unofficial peace initiatives and, emerging from it, the citizens' movement.

The Christian peace movement presented the political elite with a fundamental problem. Although in the early 1970s, state representatives spoke very positively of the initiatives within the Churches, its pacifist approach undermined the regime's own, carefully constructed peace-loving image.[96] For the Christian community peace initiatives had no ideological agenda. The 'Aktion Sühnezeichen' (Action Reconciliation), the long-running SOFD initiative, the international appeal 'Jetzt Abrüsten', and the 'Schwerter zu Pflugscharen' movement were related

initiatives. It involved thousands of Christians and non-Christians, including many young people, who were hoping to stop the ideological blocs from destroying the world.[97] In March 1982, the officially sanctioned peace movement under the control of the FDJ adopted the slogan of 'Bewaffneter Frieden' (Armed Peace), particularly in response to the strongly pacifist tendencies reflected in the 'Schwerter zu Pflugscharen' initiative.[98]

One of the major and most controversial initiatives within the unofficial peace movement proved the open letter *Berlin Appell – Frieden schaffen ohne Waffen* that had been co-authored by Robert Havemann and Rainer Eppelmann. It acquired international backing very quickly during the first half of the 1980s and collected over 2000 signatures. Eppelmann had already drawn attention to himself by organising the popular 'Bluesmessen' and other events specially designed for young people in his parish church in Berlin. This letter, however, argued publicly that peace had priority over the preservation of the GDR.[99] Nevertheless, Eppelmann was detained for only a short time and avoided further litigation on the initiative of the Protestant Church of Berlin-Brandenburg.[100] In fact, in spite of Eppelmann's continued activity throughout the 1980s and the apparent and growing resentment towards him voiced by state functionaries, the state never contained him effectively.[101] Although the 'Staatssekretär für Kirchenfragen' repeatedly discussed the problem with Church representatives at the highest level and initiated measures against him, Eppelmann was able to persist in his activities.[102] Even close cooperation between the MfS and the state secretary, did not succeed in containing Eppelmann.[103] Repeatedly, the state accepted compromises that allowed him and other Church representatives to carry on with initiatives that evaded state policy. Many events took place within the Churches, from readings or performances by artists who had fallen out of favour with the authorities to meetings of the many groups that emerged during the 1980s, in spite of explicit warnings, threats, and direct intervention from the state secretary. A particular increase in the frequency of such events became apparent from 1978 onwards.[104] The commitment of individual pastors stood up to the pressure applied by the state, as in the case of Propst Wyhe, who in 1987 encouraged his pastors to continue inviting artists such as the controversial Stephan Krawczyk:

> During a parish meeting, a singer–songwriter such as Stephan Krawczyk can also contribute, if he presents from his point of view human problems of a personal or social nature and the search for the meaning of life. It is important that solidarity keeps its intended

direction, which helps our neighbours in accordance with the words of Jesus Christ.[105]

Two years earlier, Krawczyk and his partner Freya Klier had been officially banned from public entertainment.[106] Such individual decisions ensured the survival of 'voices' within the GDR. Furthermore, in many cases the regime was unable to prevent such events.

Similarly, the Churches continued to provide shelter for the groups of the citizens' movement in spite of regular confrontations with state functionaries and the constant threat of MfS involvement. Even the Churches' own doubts with regard to the concepts and purposes of the groups and the growing resentments among Church communities who felt threatened by the oppositional activities of the groups did not prevent their basic support.[107] This support included not only the availability of space but went as far as direct intervention at the highest level on the behalf of the groups, as in January 1988 after the detention of Vera Lengsfeld, Bärbel Bohley, Stephan Krawczyk and other leading members of the citizen's movement. Furthermore, the governing body of the Churches in Berlin-Brandenburg raised awareness by documenting the events. It also organised demonstrations of solidarity such as one event in Berlin-Friedrichsfelde that took place on 25 January. It attracted about 400 participants, mostly in the age group twenty-five to thirty, and a letter was written to writers, which asked them to express their support for Krawczyk.[108]

Over a decade, from 1978 until 1989, the representatives of the Churches managed to find ways that allowed them to protect and support people and groups that were thorns in the side of the state. In particular, by clinging to the crucial 1978 agreement, compromises were found between the functionaries and the Churches that maintained a working relationship. Church representatives used specific strategies, in line with the more democratic structures of the Protestant Churches, to deal with and often avoid the demands of the state. However, they also offered solutions that allowed the state to continue working with the Churches. This process was made possible by a strong desire on both sides to safeguard this dialogue, which affected substantial parts of the population that were not easily integrated into socialist society. The regime, in spite of the difficulties and tension that accompanied state–Church relations never applied the full force available to it. In this context, the Protestant Churches relied heavily on the official and public assurance of their independent position within the state.[109]

Co-existence

Horst Dohle described the character of state–Church relations by highlighting an unexpectedly self-assured stance of Church representatives in discussions with the regime: 'During such talks at all levels, the Churches debated not primarily the interests of the Churches or tried to convert the state officials but questioned socialism according to its own proclaimed claims and their violation in everyday life.'[110] Although state functionaries resented this approach and repeatedly refused to discuss general questions, the more confident attitude represented a huge step for the Churches and their representatives.

The compromises, which sustained state–Church relations throughout the 1980s, became most apparent in the handling of various events and developments. Many concessions had to be made on both sides to maintain this difficult relationship. In 1973, the X World Youth Festival, for example, was staged in the GDR. The Churches reached many compromises with the organising state officials that allowed them to get involved in the festival without being sucked into the state agenda.[111] Similarly, the organisation of the yearly national youth festivals, the 'Pfingsttreffen', called for compromises that accommodated the Churches' involvement.[112] One outstanding event that, at least temporarily, illustrated the prospect and the potential of a flexible approach was the 500th anniversary of Martin Luther's birth in 1983.

In 1975, the KKL decided to celebrate Luther's 500th anniversary. A commission was set up to co-ordinate the organisation of the celebrations. In February 1978, the Protestant Churches informed the 'Staatssekretär für Kirchenfragen' of its intentions.[113] In the meeting on 6 March 1978 Honecker suggested a co-ordination of state and Church initiatives, a proposal which was successfully rejected. Honecker had aimed to make two bishops members of the GDR committee that was eventually created in 1980, which would have put the state in a position of control. After a drawn-out exchange lasting from May until November 1979, both sides eventually compromised by using the term collaboration rather than membership. The two committees were able to work loosely alongside each other, cooperating in certain areas whenever necessary to ensure the smooth running of the celebrations and to satisfy the interest of both sides.[114]

One such problem area that required the cooperation from the GDR committee was the attitude of local functionaries. In various cases, the state secretary had to threaten direct intervention by Honecker before they agreed to support the preparations for the Luther anniversary.[115] Functionaries at the local level were used to interpreting central policy

according to their own interests, and in particular, secretaries of the SED in the fifteen districts of the GDR had acquired some political leeway in the 1980s, which they tried to exploit.[116] Honecker, however, proved determined not to accept the individual concerns of local dignitaries. When the SED secretary in Erfurt, Gerhard Müller, tried to convince Honecker to attend the official opening of a working-class memorial on 21 April 1983, the same day as the reopening of the Luther exhibition, the general secretary pointed out that he was visiting Erfurt only because of Luther, not also because of Luther.[117] Furthermore, Wittenberg refused planning permission for a building, to be paid for and constructed by the Churches, to house visitors to the celebration and later be turned into a nunnery. It took a letter from Honecker to make the responsible functionaries change their minds about this matter.[118] These tactics were meant to limit the public exposure of the Churches but Honecker hoped to use the Luther celebrations to improve the international image of the GDR. One part of his plan had been to invite international dignitaries, and although many ignored the invitation, the celebrations became an unofficial meeting point for East and West German politicians.[119] Church representatives, who invited influential West German politicians such as Richard von Weizsäcker, supported this informal approach.[120]

Considering the tension that marked the state–Church relationship during the early 1980s, the willingness to cooperate and to compromise shown by both sides in the context of the Luther anniversary was quite remarkable and gave an impression of both the complexity and potential of this relationship. Up to 1983, tension had been heightened greatly by issues such as the 'Friedensdekaden', the steady increase in the number of groups within the Churches, and the issue of the travel arrangements between East and West Germany. Not surprisingly, there were some on both sides whose suspicions were raised by the extent of the collaboration in relation to the Luther celebrations in a year that was a Marx anniversary.[121] Furthermore, Honecker's official statement in *Neues Deutschland* suggested the possibility of accepting the Christian world view as a valid alternative.[122] In the press release, prepared by Gysi on specific orders from Honecker, he promised all Christians equal treatment within the socialist society, stating: 'that all citizens of the GDR, independently from their worldview and religion have the same chances to contribute to the development of socialist society.'[123] The responsible secretaries of the ZK SED, Paul Verner and later Werner Jarowinsky, however, never acknowledged this assertion.[124] There was a strong backlash in state–Church relations towards the end of 1983,

dashing hopes for a continuation of the positive experiences that had been enjoyed by both sides during the preparation of the Luther anniversary. Nevertheless, the celebrations had shown the importance of compromises in relation to and the complexity of Church policy in the GDR.

Between 1971 and 1989 in particular, the state accepted various compromises and to some extent cooperated with the Churches on diverse issues, such as the preparation of the Luther celebrations or the treatment of the groups that were setting up within the Protestant Churches from the late 1970s onwards. The Churches were accepted as the only organisations that stood apart from state structures but were relevant to society. They had the right to educate members within their own educational system and they were able to broadcast on radio and TV, undermining both the monopolies on education and information. These compromises stabilised the GDR until 1987.[125]

Conclusion

Compromises enabled the state and the population to live with each other until the summer of 1989. They gave life in the dictatorship an additional dimension that allowed the majority of the population to feel connected to the socialist state and which made individual lifes acceptable and even worthwhile. The 'Geborgenheit' factor, so prominent in the memories of many former East Germans in the early years after unification, was one aspect of this situation. As has been shown in relation to the writing community and the Christian community in particular, under Honecker the state compromised on a wide variety of issues and to an extent that went beyond mere necessity. Furthermore, in cases where arrangements were reached and maintained over a length of time they mostly bore results that benefited both sides. Social benefits for the general population, privileges for the writing community, and cooperation with the Churches represented crucial policy measures that enabled large parts of society to continue living in this dictatorship and to feel part of it. These measures were implemented by the state for various reasons, many of them concentrating on the international image of the GDR and the integration of various sections of society. Not all of them were based on the weakness of a collapsing state, as has been suggested by Schroeder and other followers of the totalitarian approach.[126] Honecker did not feel too weak, for example, to return to a much more confrontational Church policy after the successful cooperation over four years to prepare the Luther anniversary.[127]

The 1980s in particular were characterised by a new search in individualisation and differentiation, a development that made it extremely difficult for the state to contain the various forces from within society and which made the events of 1989 possible in the first place. The compromises were a way in which the state dealt with this situation, an approach that was only possible through the participation of major sections of society.

In some aspects, the issue of participation is linked to the ability to voice criticism and to be heard. The use made by the population of 'voice' throughout the 1970s and 1980s is crucial to the understanding of the last two years of the GDR's existence. In the final chapter, the events of 1988 and 1989 will be contrasted with the circumstances of the 1970s and most of the 1980s to show fundamental differences. Thereby, the final section will directly address the link between the stability and rapid collapse of this socialist state.

8
Conclusion – Stability and the Image of Doom

> The government has gone mad and the people have lost their minds.
>
> Bärbel Bohley[1]

This conclusion will draw together discussions from the previous chapters. As has been shown, GDR society was marked by the shortcomings of the political structures which accommodated social and cultural differentiation. Such limitations encouraged both tensions and the utilisation of existing channels of communication, which in turn lead to compromises between society and the regime. Participation of the population stabilised the political system throughout the 1970s and most of the 1980s. Only when compromises collapsed and co-existence became impossible in the face of changing political attitudes among both the political elite and the population did the regime become unbalanced.

The final crucial aspect of GDR history, the events of 1989, will be considered in relation to the image of doom which the totalitarian model applies to the socialist state. In particular, the situation in East Germany during the 1970s and most of the 1980s will be compared with the developments of 1988 and 1989. By highlighting the breakdown of compromises and changing channels of communication, which had stabilised the state beforehand, strong political contrasts will become apparent. The GDR collapsed in response to major international and domestic changes, not because of historical necessity.

The preconditions of stability and change: a summary

With reference to four social groups, the respective chapters explored the structures of the regime, differentiations within society, participation,

and the significance of 1989 in the context of previous social and political stability. In the following summary, arguments will be drawn together to underline once again the stability of the GDR until 1987.

Starting with a view from the top of the political pyramid, the regime's structural fabric has been analysed. This approach focused on the impact of both central policy and the activity of institutions. As the findings of Chapters 2 and 3 have shown, important gaps in the political apparatus undermined the regime's attempt to impose its authority on all aspects of social, cultural, economic, and political life. These limitations were primarily based on the regime's categorisation of society into rough sections, a tendency that was also reflected in the inefficient utilisation of great amounts of data that was collected throughout the GDR.

In comparison to Ulbricht's political methods, Honecker introduced some major changes to central policy. He offered specific improvements and privileges to the various social groups which, however, also increased their isolation from each other, thereby stifling cooperation between them. Young people in particular experienced a peculiar combination of control and privilege, whereby the regime linked an increase in indoctrination to a rise in the status of youth within socialist society. In contrast, the officially sanctioned emancipation of women was hampered by traditional stereotypes, which continued to influence the attitudes and expectations among both men and women. However, central policy regarding women was of limited success, reflected mostly in employment figures and upheld by social provisions. More importantly, the illusion of gender equality was maintained, an achievement that fundamentally shaped women's self-perception. Writers occupied a noticeably stronger position. Both established writers and those working on the fringes of society were confronted with the regime's offer of status, power, and certain privileges in exchange for loyalty and support. In specific cases, writers with international connections were able to use their almost inviolable position to act as a substitute for the missing public sphere. In relation to the Christian community, Honecker trod carefully, trying to avoid the impression of a 'Kirchenkampf', which would have undermined his international ambitions. International connections secured the position of the Churches and ensured some limited privileges, which were formalised by the agreement of March 1978. Furthermore, the lack of centralisation in the Protestant Churches made effective control by the regime impossible. Common flaws of central policy included structural limitations such as inflexibility and the tendency to force sections of society outside the official institutions.

Both eventually accommodated the cooperation between different social groups. Honecker's new approach was hampered severely by the international and domestic difficulties encountered in the late 1970s. It also undermined political continuity, a main feature of political stability.

Particular problems arose in response to the inadequacy of mass organisations such as the FDJ or the DFD. Although to some extent they served their purpose in politicising specific sections of society, institutions that had been devised as communicative tools failed in the end to fulfil crucial aspects of their political roles. Institutional structures were similar for youth, women, and writers. Common characteristics were centralisation, a distinct hierarchy, an overlap of personnel, and the importance of individuals to the workings of political bodies. This situation encouraged both the acceptance of superiority and the passing on of responsibilities. A major drawback was the game of numbers, which focused activities of mass organisations and bloc parties on the indiscriminate recruitment of new members from the late 1970s onwards. It paralysed their initiative and undermined effective dialogue between the regime and the population. Nevertheless, society continued to develop in reaction to the stagnant and inefficient institutions. Some sections of society turned towards alternative institutions such as provided by the Protestant Churches. The regime's claim and influence on the population created both a feeling of security and resentment. Its central policies and network of institutions were treated with contempt but accepted. However, the existence of an alternative institutional structure provided exceptional opportunities, which were exploited by fringe sections of society.

The political system influenced the East German population deeply, both in terms of mental attitudes and behaviour patterns, but at the same time, the regime's structural limitations unwittingly encouraged differentiation within society. They accommodated the participation of society in the regime. The political apparatus provided channels of communication and proved unable to suppress unwanted expressions of 'voice'. The apparent lack of total control over society combined with the totalitarian ambitions of the regime resulted in a situation whereby large sections of the population successfully exploited any available political and cultural opening to safeguard their autonomy. This situation had wider implications for the stability of East German society. The regime was dependent on the cooperation of the various social groups, which were intent on realising their propensity for individualism. Differentiation existed in all sections of society.

The experiences of social groups differed, as did their reactions to the expectations of the regime. As has been highlighted in Chapter 4, the self-perception of the social groups depended on aspects that were not exclusively based on central policies. Traditional social forces such as the generational conflict and gender roles contributed noticeably to the attitudes of social groups and subgroups. They combined old and new features, a situation encouraged by the regime's use of privileges to integrate social groups. The reproduction of elites and class differences, which became apparent in the 1970s, was fostered by central policies and contributed to the persistence of social differences. Women, for example, combined a strong expectation of equality with a feeling of primary responsibility for household and family. The self-perception of young people depended largely on their social background. At school, political initiative, intellectual achievement, and religious affiliation introduced new categories that could override inherited perceptions of the self. Nevertheless, basic differences between girls and boys, primarily in terms of intellectual achievement and political commitment, became recognisable at an early stage. General issues such as gender roles were still of major importance to attitudes and behaviour patterns within social groups. In addition, while young people and women had the possibility of avoiding politics by displaying a basic loyalty, often as part of a large group, writers were defined much more by their political opinions. This group showed strong individualistic tendencies, and, because of their elite position, they encountered much pressure to support actively and publicly the regime's political aims. Taking sides was a precondition for their professional careers. In contrast, Christians were deemed outsiders from the start without providing individuals with much influence on their position. Much of their self-perception was linked to this experience which, however, also included some aspects of elite thinking based on the protection afforded to some extent by this group's isolation. Furthermore, alternative networks and lifestyles that developed within East Germany actively shaped cultural and political developments during the late 1970s and the 1980s. Interaction had a crucial impact on relationships, which in all cases included compromises and mutual dependencies that stabilised the regime.

Based on the diversity that characterised East German society in the Honecker era, Chapter 5 explored the interactive relationships, and especially tensions, within the GDR which limited the regime's authority without, however, threatening to overturn it. Such tensions existed in a variety of cultural, social, and political settings. When referring to the four social groups at the centre of this discussion, prime examples of

tensions encountered within and between the groups were continuing social divisions, traditional gender roles, the generational conflict, and the outsider position of the Christian community. The isolation of social groups was a major political tool employed both by the regime and rival social groups in their battle for privileges. Tensions arose from this method but it also caused enclaves such as the Prenzlauer Berg scene to develop. In the long term, isolation of specific sections of society under-mined the stability of the regime. Christian communities in particular were isolated to such an extent that they became attractive to fringe groups. These exploited the Churches' institutions without having any religious attachment – a success of an atheistic education. Fringe groups such as punks and the young generation of writers did not pose a threat originally but their isolation turned them into symbols of political independence. These conflict areas shaped the relationship between the social groups and the regime, in some cases forcing the regime to compromise but also encouraging support for the political system. Limitations of state control were reflected in the attitude of the popula-tion, which was not entirely shaped by the expectations of the regime. Furthermore, the use of privileges created a strong elite preventing both effective social integration and political control. Diversity and the tensions based on it reflected the independence of East German society. They provided the base for both participation and interdependence.

The population's participation in the regime's political and social structures was crucial to the stability of society. For the majority, life in the GDR was a matter of compromising with given structures. However, as a result of the economic and political difficulties experienced in the late 1970s, Honecker became more dependent on effective communica-tion with and the participation of the population. In crucial areas such as indoctrination, central policy could be rendered meaningless by the blasé attitude of East Germans. Therefore, the management of tensions was vital to the regime. Structures existed to facilitate it but in many cases political pressure to hide fundamental problems and a general information overload caused them to become ineffective. However, throughout the 1970s and 1980s, both mainstream society and fringe groups were interested in and intent on maintaining a dialogue with the regime.

Participation was accommodated by channels of communication, specifically the petition system, which accumulated and analysed large amounts of data acquired from or handed to them by the population. However, the petition system was overburdened and had little direct impact. Broadly speaking, only petitions on selected issues were dealt

with effectively. Furthermore, individual functionaries were in a position to influence the petition system on all levels according to their personal preferences. Christians, for example, were given special treatment, with both positive and negative implications, partly in response to their peculiar position within the GDR. In any case, the vast majority of petitions were not reflective of the tensions that became apparent in 1989. In contrast, the MfS accumulated information that accurately reflected political developments. However, the huge amounts of data collected made assessment difficult. More importantly, the MfS showed a strong tendency to identify non-existent enemy influence when interpreting data. As established in Chapter 6, neither the petition system nor the MfS were willing or able to devise fundamental solutions to recognised problems, but they did occupy suitably central positions that allowed them to use the available information to stabilise East German society throughout the 1970s and most of the 1980s. The MfS in particular reacted to information and had direct political influence. The level of participation within this socialist society should not be underestimated.

The mutual aspect of political relations within the GDR was reflected primarily by compromises that were maintained by both the social groups and the regime. Chapter 7 discussed compromises relevant to the four social groups such as the use of exit, the 'Einheit von Wirtschafts- und Sozialpolitik' introduced in the 1970s, the privileged position of the cultural elite, the Prenzlauer Berg concept, and the political and cultural location of the Christian community on the edges of East German society. These were compromises partly offered freely by the regime and partly forced on it by the increasing differentiation within society. Accordingly, exit was employed to release tensions but was only effective, if those who the regime would have liked to leave did so, which was not always the case. Creating a feeling of security was more effective because it affected a much greater section of society. The regime used 'Einheit von Wirtschafts- und Sozialpolitik' as an integrative tool although from the late 1970s onwards the cost of this policy was undermining the East German economy. Furthermore, it put the GDR in direct competition with the advertisements on West German TV channels leading to a combination of continuous hope and constant disappointment. For the privileged cultural elite, the period of 'no taboos' in the 1970s and its abrupt end in 1976 was crucial as it encouraged many to take on political roles within socialist society. To leave or to stay in the dictatorship, both constituted political decisions. At the same time, the regime became proactive by paying more attention to

writers on the fringes of society, offering privileges which, however, were marked by intentions of effective integration and control.

The compromises achieved between the Churches and the regime, were particularly impressive. The strength of the Churches' position was based on their outsider position, which made possible the continued existence of independent institutions within the dictatorship. The privilege of the outsider was based on the isolation experienced by the Christian communities, which made control impossible and facilitated various initiatives, including the protection of individuals and groups. However, both sides were interested in maintaining a working relationship. In this context, social groups with international connections, such as writers and Christians, were in stronger positions to bargain with the regime than young people and women. Integration, loyalty, and stability were based on such compromises and interdependencies. More importantly, the mutuality of these social, cultural, and political relations stabilised the GDR up the mid-1980s, when Gorbachev's reforms began to question the status quo.

Collapse of the dictatorship

The developments of 1989 have repeatedly served as a vantage point from which to view the entire history of the GDR. The totalitarian model in particular interprets much of East German history in terms of this final collapse, although it came as just as much of a surprise to those living inside the dictatorship as to those observing it from the outside.[2] Such an approach ignores evidence from the period before 1987, as analysed in the previous chapters, which indicates the existence of a viable society supported by the majority of the population and has no satisfactory explanation regarding the timing of the collapse of the GDR. The impact of both events and people, combined with the rapid disintegration of the MfS, set the period 1987 to 1989 apart from previous conditions in the GDR. The year 1989, although crucial to the history of this dictatorship, cannot explain the entire forty years of the GDR's existence. During the second half of the 1980s, some important changes took place on the international stage and within the GDR that seriously undermined society. The collapse of the state was based on the lack of flexibility shown by the ageing political elite which began to withdraw, or was forced to withdraw, compromises that had maintained social and political stability during the 1970s and 1980s. With the introduction of Perestroika and Glasnost, a re-evaluation of the past and the present began which the political elite of the GDR was unable to

prevent. Gorbachev's reforms challenged most of the basic assumptions of life in the GDR and questioned the validity of compromises that had supported the relationship between state and society for many years. They undermined the status quo and encouraged parts of the population to discuss more openly issues that had been taboo for many years – issues lethal to the stability of the state such as the lack of economic success, travel outside the Eastern Bloc, and popular input into politics.

The build-up of 1987 and 1988 and the culmination of events in 1989 saw the coming together of large sections of society that had previously been isolated from each other by political attitude, privileges or social differences. During this period, dissidents, the Churches, artists, young people, and women began to move towards the same basic aim, political change. In combination with the refusal and inability of the political elite to react to the demands for change that were voiced forcefully by the population, the political situation reached boiling point in September 1989. Both, international developments and the regime's lack of initiative during the crucial summer months of 1989 led to an ending of compromises on both sides. This process, however, was not a reflection of GDR society and its internal dynamics before the late 1980s. It constituted the response to fundamental economic and political change. The relationship between state and society under Honecker created both crises and upturns in political relations – it was not a continuous decline. Hindsight with regard to the GDR brings the danger of simplification when, in fact, we are dealing with a complex society that had functioned sufficiently well to exist for four decades.

Crucially, the political leadership did not address the apparent and growing difficulties. In the context of youth policy, for example, the ZIJ recorded a massive regressive trend in youth commitment to the GDR in the run-up to the decisive year of 1989, of which the central institutions and members of the Politburo were informed regularly.[3] Similarly, the SED membership statistics indicate a break that occurred in 1987. Based on rising expectations linked to the Gorbachev reforms, 1986 was a particularly positive year in terms of membership numbers with an increase of nearly 29,000 and only 256 illegal exits by SED members between 1 December 1985 and 30 November 1986. However, this increase slowed down dramatically to only 6000 members in 1987 and turned into a decline of 4000 in the following year. Illegal exits reached 424 in 1987 and nearly doubled again to 834 in 1988.[4] In the same year, the party initiated 23,000 proceedings against members. This constituted the highest number since the foundation of the SED.[5] It reflected an increase in

tension which was apparent from 1987 onwards. A differentiation must be made between the period 1987 to 1989 and previous political and social circumstances.

In a report from the beginning of 1989, one MfS officer stated that the events at the end of 1988 'from Greifswald to Ilmenau, from Wismar to Zittau' had not been expected, primarily because of a lack of specific information from unofficial sources.[6] Similarly, throughout the 1980s, the international community perceived the GDR as a stable state. The official observers in East Berlin were not impressed by the activities of the political groups. Even in September 1989, West German state secretary Bertele was expecting little from the citizens' movement, when he commented on an event organised by 'Neues Forum':

> The event showed that the activity of new and old groups within the GDR is far away from effective oppositional work. The reports about the 'opposition' in the GDR, as our press has published them, are exaggerated and inflated. Bärbel Bohley is unable to give direction; her amateurish manner shows clearly the difficulties regarding the realisation of her goals in terms of content and organisation.[7]

Furthermore, Bertele recommended that no support be given to these groups as he had missed any 'political talent' and 'basic organisational structures'. A report from him dated 22 September 1989 stated that the movement did not threaten the regime. In his opinion, the position of the Churches was not primarily political and, again, support from the Western side was not recommended and, in fact, would be useless to the groups.[8] He, like most, did not expect the revolution to take place. As late as June 1989, Mielke believed that no immediate threat existed. He was convinced that the citizens' movement's aspirations were in line with the long-term plans of the NATO states, which did not expect any fundamental change in the Eastern Bloc in the near future.

The period 1987 to 1989 was fundamentally different to the previous years of Honecker's reign as the regime, under pressure from external changes, withdrew compromises and limited communication. Tensions began to concentrate on specific issues, such as freedom of opinion and freedom of movement, and sections of society that had been isolated by social and cultural differences increasingly moved closer together as popular criticism focused on the regime. The culmination of events in 1989 was based on changes in attitude among the political elite and the population. These changes, however, had been initiated primarily by major international developments. The collapse of the GDR in 1989 was

the result of dramatic events that transformed long-established structures, central policies, and, crucially, behaviour patterns. During the fifteen years before Gorbachev came to power, East German society was marked by political vicissitudes, not a continuous decline. The events of 1989 did not realise the image of doom that has been applied to GDR history in retrospect.[9]

More than anything else, in the period 1971 to 1987 the GDR's distinction was constituted by the regime's lack of total power or exceptional ideological achievement. Life in the GDR was ordinary for the majority of the population. Only the events of 1989 set this socialist state apart. When the majority of the population increasingly ignores fundamental aspects such as ideological education, the regime loses its powers of control. In 1989, the population's willingness to cooperate with the state's institutions declined and, thereby, the entire political system was called into question.[10]

Problems, limitations, and tensions existed in East German society but until the very last years of the 1980s, none of these seriously threatened the regime. In contrast, imperfections both encouraged and accommodated diversity, autonomy, and participation. The existence of social and cultural spaces stabilised society by encouraging the utilisation of communication channels and forcing the development of compromises. The events of 1989, however, resulted from a breakdown of communication based on the dramatic change of basic political conditions.

Notes

1 Introduction

1. From 'Akte Endler' (1988), cited in: Peter Geist, ed., *Ein Molotow-Cocktail auf fremder Bettkante-Lyrik der 70/80er Jahre von Dichtern aus der DDR* (Leipzig, 1991), p. 153.
2. In 1989, *c.* 25% of the population were members of the Protestant Churches and 4–5% were Catholics. Nevertheless, the regime attitude towards Christianity isolated the Christian community in the GDR as a minority. Furthermore, the Protestant Churches themselves defined their position as that of a minority. See Detlef Pollack, 'Von der Volkskirche zur Minderheitskirche. Zur Entwicklung von Religiosität und Kirchlichkeit in der DDR', p. 271. In: Hartmut Kaelble, Jürgen Kocka, Hartmut Zwahr, eds, *Sozialgeschichte der DDR* (Stuttgart, 1994), pp. 271–94.
3. Edeltraud Schulze, *DDR-Jugend-Ein Statistisches Handbuch* (Berlin, 1995), p. 64
4. Hans Steussloff, *Zur Identität der Ostdeutschen-Merkmale und Tendenzen eines Phänomens* (Berlin, 2000), p. 32.
5. See for an extensive overview of the developments within the totalitarian approach to GDR history: Klaus Schroeder, Steffen Alisch, *Der SED-Staat-Geschichte und Strukturen der DDR* (Munich, 1998), pp. 632–48.
6. See Mary Fulbrook, 'Reckoning with the Past: Heroes, Victims, and Villains in the History of the German Democratic Republic'. In: Reinhard Alter, Peter Monteath, eds, *Rewriting the German Past* (New Jersey, 1997), pp. 175–96.
7. See for example: Biographies by Egon Krenz, Erich Honecker, and Margot Honecker.
8. See for example Armin Mitter, Stefan Wolle, *Untergang auf Raten: unbekannte Kapitel der DDR-Geschichte* (Munich, 1995); Klaus Schroeder, 'Die DDR: eine (spät-)totalitäre Gesellschaft'. In: Manfred Wilke, ed., *Die Anatomie der Parteizentrale-Die KPD/SED auf dem Weg zur Macht* (Berlin, 1998), pp. 525–62; Schroeder, *Der SED-Staat*; Klaus-Dietmar Henke, ed., *Totalitarismus* (Dresden, 1999).
9. See for example Richard Bessel, Ralph Jessen, *Die Grenzen der Diktatur Staat und Gesellschaft in der DDR* (Göttingen, 1996).
10. See specifically Sigmund Neumann (1942) and Gerhard Leibholz (1968) cited in Schroeder, *Der SED-Staat*, p. 636; Henke, *Totalitarismus*, pp. 9–18.
11. Agnes Heller (1983) cited in Schroeder, *Der SED-Staat*, p. 639.
12. Manfred Funke cited in ibid., p. 643.
13. Hans Buchheim and Leszek Kolakowski cited in Ibid., pp. 634, 638.
14. Cited in ibid., pp. 635, 638.
15. Cited in ibid., p. 639.
16. Cited in Henke, *Totalitarismus*, pp. 9–18.
17. Schroeder, *Der SED-Staat*, pp. 632–48; see also Eckhard Jesse, 'Die Totalitarismusforschung im Streit der Meinungen'. In: Eckhard Jesse, ed., *Totalitarismus im 20. Jahrhundert* (Bonn, 1999), pp. 9–40.

18. See Jochen Staadt, *Eingaben-Die institutionalisierte Meckerkultur in der DDR* (Berlin, 1996).

19. Especially the comparison of the Nazi regime with communist states is a matter of controversy. See Henke, *Totalitarismus*, p. 16.

20. Peter Hübner, ed., *Eliten im Sozialismus-Beiträge zur Sozialgeschichte der DDR* (Cologne, Weimar, Vienna, 1999); Peter Hübner, Klaus Tenfelde, *Arbeiter in der SBZ/DDR* (Essen, 1999); Thomas Lindenberger, ed., *Herrschaft und Eigen-Sinn in der Diktatur-Studien zur Gesellschaftsgeschichte der DDR* (Cologne, Weimar, Vienna, 1999).

21. For specific issues such as youth see: Dorle Zilch, *Millionen unter der Blauen Fahne-Die FDJ, Zahlen-Fakten-Tendenzen* (Rostock, 1994) and Ulrike Schuster, *Wissen ist Macht-FDJ, Studenten und die Zeitung FORUM in der SBZ/DDR-eine Dokumentation* (Berlin, 1997); Local studies: Stephan Schnitzler, *Der Umbruch in der DDR auf kommunal-politischer Ebene-eine empirische Studie zum Demokratisierungsprozess von 1989/90 in der Stadt Erfurt* (Göttingen, 1996).

22. For an outstanding example of such an attempt, see Kaelble *et al.*, *Sozialgeschichte.*

23. Alf Lüdtke, ' "Helden der Arbeit" – Mühen beim Arbeiten. Zur missmutigen Loyalität von Industriearbeitern in der DDR' and Jürgen Kocka, 'Eine durchherrschte Gesellschaft'. In: Kaelble *et al.*, *Sozialgeschichte*, pp. 188–213, 547–54.

24. Alf Lüdtke, Peter Becker, eds, *Akten, Eingaben, Schaufenster. Die DDR und ihre Texte. Erkundungen zu Herrschaft und Alltag* (Berlin, 1997).

25. Alf Lüdtke *et al.*, *Akten*; see also Steffen H. Elsner, 'Flankierende Stabilisierungsmechanismen diktatorischer Herrschaft: Das Eingabewesen in der DDR', p. 84. In: Christoph Boyer, Peter Skyba, eds, *Repression und Wohlstandsversprechen – Zur Stabilisierung von Parteiherrschaft in der DDR und der CSSR* (Dresden, 1999), pp. 75–86.

26. Schroeder, *Der SED-Staat*, p. 632.

27. Ibid., p. 633. See also: Ilko-Sascha Kowalczuk, http://hsozkult.geschichte.hu-berlin.de/rezensio/buecher/1999/kosa0599.htm, p. 6.

28. See Sigrid Meuschel, 'Überlegungen zu einer Herrschafts und Gesellschaftsgeschichte der DDR'. In: *Geschichte und Gesellschaft 19* (Göttingen, 1993), pp. 5–14.

29. Heike Solga, *Auf dem Weg in eine klassenlose Gesellschaft? Klassenlagen und Mobilität zwischen Generationen in der DDR* (Berlin, 1995); see also Johannes Huinink, Karl Ulrich Mayer *et al.*, *Kollektiv und Eigensinn-Lebensverläufe in der DDR und danach* (Berlin, 1995), pp. 35–6.

30. Konrad H. Jarausch, 'Realer Sozialismus als Fürsorgediktatur. Zur begrifflichen Einordnung der DDR'. In: *Aus Politik und Zeitgeschichte*, B 20/1998, pp. 33–46.

31. Irene Dölling, 'Zwischen Hoffnung und Hilflosigkeit-Frauen nach der "Wende" in der DDR', p. 96. In: *1999. Zeitschrift für Sozialgeschichte des 20. und 21 Jahrhunderts*, 5/4 (Hamburg, Cologne, 1990), pp. 92–100; Elsner, 'Flankierende Stabilisierungsmechanismen', p. 75.

32. Konrad H. Jarausch, 'Beyond Uniformity – The Challenge of Historicizing the GDR', p. 6. In: Konrad H. Jarausch, ed., *Dictatorship as Experience: Towards a Socio-Cultural History of the GDR* (New York, 1999), pp. 3–14.

33. Ibid., pp. 8–9.

34. Especially with regard to Church–state relations compromises went beyond welfare issues and were of great political significance. See Chapter 7 for further details.

35. Wolfgang Emmerich, *Kleine Literaturgeschichte der DDR* (Leipzig, 1996).

36. See for example reception and analysis of GDR's women's literature by Ursula Heukenkamp, Barbara Einhorn, and Dorothea Boeck.

37. Julia Hell, 'Critical Orthodoxies, Old and New, or The Fantasy of a Pure Voice: Christa Wolf', pp. 65–7. In: Jost Hernard, Marc Silberman, eds, *Contentious Memories-Looking back at the GDR* (New York, 1998), pp. 65–101.

38. Emmerich, *Literaturgeschichte*, pp. 286–8.

39. Marc Silberman, 'Whose Story Is This? Rewriting the Literary History of the GDR', pp. 27, 31. In: Hernard *et al.*, *Contentious Memories*, pp. 25–57.

40. David Bathrick, *The Powers of Speech – The Politics of Culture in the GDR* (Lincoln, London, 1995), pp. 34, 70.

41. Gwyneth E. Edwards, *GDR Society and Social Institutions – Facts and Figures* (London, Basingstoke, 1985).

42. Eva Kolinsky, *Women in 20th-century Germany – A Reader* (Manchester, New York, 1995), pp. 95, 97.

43. Eva Kolinsky, *Women in Contemporary Germany – Life, Work and Politics* (Providence, Oxford, 1993), p. 2.

44. Study by K. Bast, I. Ostner cited in Prue Chamberlayne, 'Transitions in the Private Sphere in Eastern Germany', p. 295. In: W.R. Lee, Eve Rosenhaft, eds, *State, Social Policy and Social Change in Germany 1880–1994* (Oxford, New York, 1997), pp. 286–313.

45. Chamberlayne, 'Transitions', pp. 300, 310.

46. Gunnar Winkler, *Frauenreport'90* (Berlin, 1990).

47. Both were published within the *Grüne Reihe* by the scientific council 'Die Frau in der sozialistischen Gesellschaft', which was established in the late 1960s. See also Gisela Helwig, Hildegard Maria Nickel, *Frauen in Deutschland 1945–92* (Bonn, 1993); Irene Dölling, 'Entwicklungswidersprüche berufstätiger Frauen in der sozialistischen Gesellschaft'. In: *Formen der Individualität: Theorie der Gesellschaftlichen und Historischen Individualitätsformen im Verhältnis zu Kulturtheorie und Kulturgeschichte, Materialien des X.Kulturtheoretischen Kolloquiums, November 1981*, Mitteilungen aus der Kulturhistorischen Forschung 11 (Berlin, 1982), pp. 76–87; Dölling, 'Hoffnung und Hilflosigkeit'; Dölling, 'Über den Patriarchalismus Staatssozialistischer Gesellschaften und die Geschlechtsfrage im Gesellschaftlichen Umbruch'. In: Wolfgang Zapf, ed., *Die Modernisierung Moderner Gesellschaften. Verhandlungen des 25. Soziologentages in Frankfurt/M. 1990* (Frankfurt/M, 1991), pp. 407–17.

48. Renate Liebsch, Angelika Haas, 'Forschungen zu Frauen, aber keine Frauenforschung?'. In: Peer Pasternack, ed., *Hochschule Ost, Politisch-Akademisches Journal aus Ostdeutschland*, 1996/3, pp. 9–20.

49. The *Grüne Reihe* in particular still contains much material that has been neglected so far.

50. One notable exception is: Grit Bühler, *Mythos Gleichberechtigung in der DDR-Politische Partizipation von Frauen am Beispiel des DFD* (Frankfurt/M., 1997)

51. Women made up 48.8% of the workforce in 1989. Cited from Winkler, *Frauenreport'90*, p. 62.

52. See Vera Maria Bähr, *Wir Denken Erst Seit Gorbatschow* (Recklinghausen, 1990) and Helga Gotschlich, *Ausstieg aus der DDR* (Berlin, 1990).

53. Evelyn Brislinger, Brigitte Hausstein, Eberhard Riedel, eds, *Jugend im Osten-Sozialwissenschaftliche Daten und Kontextissen aus der DDR Sowie den Neuen Bundesländern, 1969–95* (Berlin, 1997).

54. Schuster, *Wissen*; Karen Leeder, *Breaking Boundaries – A New Generation of Poets in the GDR* (Oxford, 1996).

55. Dorothee Wierling, 'The Hitler Youth Generation in the GDR'. In: Jarausch, *Dictatorship*, pp. 307–19.

56. Chamberlayne, 'Transitions', p. 290.

57. Uwe Kolbe in *Weimarer Beiträge* 7/1979, p. 46.

58. Günther Gaus, 'Nischengesellschaft'. In: Günther Gaus, *Wo Deutschland Liegt. Eine Ortsbestimmung* (Hamburg, 1983), pp. 156–233.

59. Mary Fulbrook, 'Ossis and Wessis: the Creation of two German Societies', p. 426. In: Mary Fulbrook, ed., *German History since 1800* (London, New York, 1997), pp. 411–31.

60. See Erhardt Neubert, *Abschlussbericht des Stolpe-Untersuchungsausschusses* (Berlin, 1994).

61. Robert F. Goeckel, *The Lutheran Church and the East German State* (Ithaca, London, 1990).

62. Mary Fulbrook, *Anatomy of a Dictatorship: Inside the GDR 1949–1989* (New York, 1995), p. 123.

63. F.W. Graf, 'Eine Ordnungsmacht Eigener Art. Theologie und Kirchenpolitik im DDR-Protestantismus'. In: Kaelble *et al.*, *Sozialgeschichte*.

64. See for an outstanding example of this tendency: Gerhard Besier, Stephan Wolf, eds, *Pfarrer, Christen und Katholiken-Das Ministerium für Staatssicherheit der ehemaligen DDR und die Kirchen* (Neukirchen, Vluyn, 1991).

65. See for example: Horst Dähn, Helga Gotschlich, eds, '*Und führe uns nicht in Versuchung…' Jugend im Spannungsfeld von Staat und Kirche in der SBZ/DDR 1945–1989* (Berlin, 1998).

66. One rare acknowledgement has come from: Friedrich-Martin Balzer, Christian Stappenbeck, eds, *Sie Haben das Recht zur Revolution Bejaht-Christen in der DDR* (Bonn, 1997).

67. Pollack, 'Volkskirche'.

68. Some studies have been published in this area but they often concentrate on the 1940s to 1960s. See for example Fritz Dogerloh, *Geschichte der Evangelischen Jugendarbeit Teil 1, Junge Gemeinde in der DDR* (Hannover, 1999)

69. See studies by Christoph Klessmann, Pollack, Graf. In: Kaelble *et al.*, *Sozialgeschichte*.

70. C.V. Ditfurth, *Blockflöten. Wie die CDU ihre Realsozialistische Vergangenheit bewältigt* (Cologne, 1991).

71. See Michael Richter, Martin Rissmann, eds, *Die Ost-CDU, Beiträge zu ihrer Entstehung und Entwicklung* (Weimar, Cologne, Vienna, 1995).

72. Günter Wirth, 'Die Wege der Christlichen Literatur in der Ehemaligen DDR' In: *Berliner Dialoghefte*, 8/4 (1997), pp. 44–51 and 9/1 (1998), pp. 53–61; Günter Wirth, 'Erinnerungen und Erwägungen zur CDU-Kulturpolitik'. In: Evemarie Badstübner, ed., *Befremdlich anders: Leben in der DDR*' (Berlin, 2000)

73. Materials from this source will be referenced with 'SAPMO'.

74. Reference: 'SAPMO-Library'.

75. Reference: 'BStU'.

76. Reference: 'BLA'.

77. Reference: 'ACDP'.

78. Reference: 'EZA'.
79. Reference: 'BBAW'.
80. Reference: 'DIPF/BBF/Archiv'.
81. Reference: 'Grauzone'.
82. Reference: 'SAdK'.
83. Reference: 'ZIJ'.
84. Reference: 'ESG'.
85. Also known as Vera Wollenberger, she reverted to her birth name Lengsfeld after divorce.
86. Jeffrey Kopstein, *The Politics of Economic Decline in East Germany, 1945–89* (Chapel Hill, London, 1997).
87. See Hans Modrow, ed., *Das große Haus von Außen-Erfahrungen mit der Machtzentrale in der DDR* (Berlin, 1996); Hans Modrow, ed., *Das große Haus-Insider Berichten aus dem ZK der SED* (Berlin, 1994); see also Detlef Pollack, Dieter Rink, eds, *Zwischen Verweigerung und Opposition-Politischer Protest in der DDR 1970–89* (Frankfurt/M., New York, 1997), pp. 63–5.
88. See Hans-Hermann Hertle, 'Der Sturz Erich Honeckers-Zur Rekonstruktion eines innerparteilichen Machtkampfes', p. 329. In: Klaus-Dietmar Henke, Peter Steinbach, Johannes Tuchel, eds, *Widerstand und Opposition in der DDR* (Cologne, Weimar, Vienna, 1999), pp. 327–46.
89. See also Landolf Scherzer, *Der Erste* (Berlin, 1997).
90. Otfried Arnold, Hans Modrow, 'Das Große Haus-Struktur und Funktionsweise des ZK der SED', pp. 47–9. In: Modrow, *Das große Haus – Insider*, pp. 11–70.
91. Thomas Klein, 'Zu Opposition und Widerstand in der SED', p. 213. In: Andreas Herbst, Gerd-Rüdiger Stephan, Jürgen Winkler, *Die SED, Geschichte-Organisation-Politik, Ein Handbuch* (Berlin, 1997), pp. 197–215.
92. Fulbrook, *Anatomy*.
93. See for example the various surveys of the ZIJ, but also Gabriele Eckart, *So sehe ick die Sache: Protokolle aus der DDR-Leben im Havelländischen Obstanbaugebiet* (Cologne, 1984), pp. 40, 66; Norbert Haase, Lothar Reese, Peter Wensierski, eds, *VEB-Nachwuchs-Jugend in der DDR* (Reinbek bei Hamburg, 1983), p. 42. In particular in the early 1970s much optimism and enthusiasm for the new political approach taken by Honecker could be detected.
94. Günter de Bruyn, *Vierzig Jahre. Ein Lebensbericht* (Frankfurt/M., 1998), pp. 185–6.
95. Emmerich, *Literaturgeschichte*, p. 240.

2   Central Policy

1. See John Moses, Gregory Munro, 'Rewriting the East German History: The Role of the Churches in the Collapse of German Democratic Republic', p. 230. In: Alter *et al.*, *Rewriting the German Past*, pp. 222–52; Gisela Hansen, *Christliches Erbe in der DDR-Literatur-Bibelrezeption und Verwendung Religiöser Sprache im Werk Erwin Strittmatters und in Ausgewählten Texten Christa Wolfs* (Frankfurt/M., 1995), p. 26; Edwards, *GDR Society*, p. 127.
2. Besier *et al.*, *Pfarrer, Christen und Katholiken*, p. 5.
3. Hansen, *Christliches Erbe*, p. 27.

4. See *Neues Deutschland* 20/345, 16.12.1965, p. 6; Michael Michalzik, *An der Seite der Genossen … -Offizielles Jugendbild und politische Sozialisation im SED-Staat. Zum Scheitern der sozialistischen Erziehung in der DDR* (Melle, 1994), p. 120. In autumn 1965, the GDR media suddenly focused on youth crime, although the crime rate had decreased in comparison with 1964 from 45,825 cases of crime committed by citizens in the age group 14–25 to 40,676 in 1965.

5. Emmerich, *Literaturgeschichte*, p. 181.

6. Ibid., pp. 175–87.

7. BStU MfS-HAIX9231, p. 233; HAIX444, pp. 18–23; JHS MF VVS146/70, pp. 4–5; HAIX9231, p. 236.

8. See for example Werner Jarowinsky, 10.11.1989. In: Hans-Hermann Hertle, Gerd-Rüdiger Stephan, *Götterdämmerung im Zentralkomitee* (Tonprotokolle) (Berlin, 1998), Track 24.

9. Arnold, Otfried; Modrow, Hans 'Aussenansichten', p. 26. In: Modrow, Hans, ed., *Das Große Haus von außen-Erfahrungen mit der Machtzentrale in der DDR*, edition ost (Berlin, 1996), pp. 9–38.

10. Ibid., pp. 29–30.

11. Arnold *et al*., 'Das Große Haus', p. 32.

12. Gerhard Schürer, 10.11.1989. In: Hertle, *Götterdämmerung*, Track 23; see also Hermann Kant in *Schweriner Volkszeitung*, 4.11.1994, p. 45.

13. See SAPMO DY30 IV2/2.036/40, pp. 135–6; DY30 IVB2/14/14, 22.3.1983, Rudi Bellmann to E.Honecker, p. 3; DY30 vorl.SED/32711/1, 10.6.1983, Ragwitz to Hager, p. 1.

14. Hermann Kant, *Abspann-Die Erinnerungen meiner Gegenwart* (Berlin, 1991), p. 419.

15. Arnold *et al*., 'Das Große Haus', pp. 18–20.

16. BLA-BPA IV C-2/9.02/573-1, 26.6.1972, 'Probleme und Meinungen unter den Studenten [bezüglich] des VIII. Parteitages', p. 1; BPA IV C-2/9.02/573, 15.5.1972, 'Situation an der Deutschen Hochschule für Musik'. See also results of ZIJ surveys regarding the period 1972–75.

17. Christoph Boyer, Peter Skyba, 'Sozial- und Konsumpolitik als Stabilisierungsstrategie-Zur Genese der "Einheit von Wirtschafts- und Sozialpolitik" in der DDR', p. 583. In: *Deutschlandarchiv 32/4* (1999), pp. 577–90.

18. Ibid., p. 586.

19. Goeckel, *The Lutheran Church*, p. 155.

20. Hermann Weber, *Die DDR-1945–1990* (Munich, 2000), pp. 86–7.

21. Karl-Heinz Jahnke, *Geschichte der Freien Deutschen Jugend* (Berlin, 1982), p. 464

22. Lothar Opperman, *Vom Sinn unseres Lebens* (Berlin, 1984), p. 205.

23. See for example Besier *et al*., *Pfarrer, Christen und Katholiken*; Boyer *et al*., 'Sozial- und Konsumpolitik'; Schroeder, *Der SED-Staat* and Henke, *Totalitarismus*.

24. See Karl Kayser, Bernhard Quandt, Erich Mielke in Hertle *et al*., *Götterdämmerung*; See also Erich Honecker, *Moabiter Notizen* (1994). For an early example of communist convictions in relation to youth policy see Ewald Erb, 'Politische Gleichgültigkeit der Jugend'. In: *Die internationale Revue Umschau 111/3* (1948); see also the three Youth Laws from 1950, 1964, and 1974.

25. Edwards, *GDR Society*, p. 121.

26. BLA-BPA IV C-2/9.01/540, *c.* 1973, 'Zu einigen Problemen an der Oleg-Koschewoi Oberschule', p. 2.

27. Arnold Freiburg, Christa Mahrad, *FDJ-Der sozialistische Jugendverband der DDR* (Opladen, 1982), pp. 344, 328.

28. Ibid., p. 247.

29. SAPMO DO4/1393, 4.12.1971, ZR FDJ to Seigewasser; See also BStU MfS-JHS21311/1, pp. 36–8.

30. Jutta Wilhelmi, *Jugend in der DDR-Der Weg zur 'sozialistischen Persönlichkeit'* (Berlin, 1983), p. 12.

31. Freiburg *et al.*, *FDJ*, p. 165 – Youth Law from 1974, paragraphs 19,3 and 20,3.

32. SAPMO DY6/3950,'Bezirksausschuß Neubrandenburg der Nationalen Front der DDR, 26.11.1976', p. 1.

33. See 'Maßnahmen zur Verwirklichung des Jugendgesetzes im Bezirk Dresden im Jahr 1979', 21.12.1978. In: *Mitteilungen für Staatsorgane im Bezirk Dresden*, p. 2

34. Ibid., pp. 15–16.

35. Dagmar Meyer, ed., *Zur Situation von Kindern und Jugendlichen in der DDR-Materialsammlung* (Berlin, 1990), pp. 43–4.

36. ZIJ-29 U70, 'Diplomarbeit 1.4.1972'; ZIJ-57 and ZIJ-60 S58 'Schnellinfo, FDJ und massenpolitische Arbeit, Juli 1983'.

37. SAPMO DY24/14230, 10.1.1989, Eberhard Aurich, 'Probleme und Schwierigkeiten von 1.Kreissekretären', pp. 11–13.

38. Panorama DDR, ed., *Free German Youth – The GDR's All-embracing Youth Organisation* (Berlin, Dresden, 1985), p. 17.

39. BLA-BPA IV C-2/9.01/540, *c.* 1973, 'Probleme an der Oleg-Koschewoi Oberschule', p. 3; see also SAPMO DY30/33528, 'Vorbereitung und Durchführung der Wahlen am 14.6.1981', p. 1.

40. Steussloff, *Identität der Ostdeutschen*, p. 32.

41. BStU-JHS24434, October 1985, Oberst Andruschow, 'Die politisch-operative Arbeit zur Jugendpolitik', p. 13.

42. BStU MfS-HAXX292, 8.4.1987, 'Spezielle Probleme der politisch-operativen Sicherung der Volksbildung', p. 25.

43. BStU MfS SED-KL/3247, pp. 40–7.

44. BStU MfS JHS VVS739/79, p. 10.

45. SAPMO DO4/808, 28.6.1984, 'Probleme der "offenen Jugendarbeit" im Bezirk Magdeburg', p. 3; DY31/1113, 'Gesundheitszustand der Bevölkerung, 1986', p. 8.

46. BStU JHS VVS976/83, p. 9.

47. Ursula Sillge, *Un-Sichtbare Frauen-Lesben und ihre Emanzipation in der DDR* (Berlin, 1991) and Samirah Kenawi, *Frauengruppen in der DDR der 80er Jahre-Eine Dokumentation* (Berlin, 1995).

48. Friedrich Engels, *Der Ursprung der Familie, des Privateigentums und des Staats* (1884).

49. Dorothee Wierling, *Is Gender a Useful Category for the History of the GDR?* Seminar in Modern German History, 2.11.2000 (London).

50. Freya Klier, *Die Frau zwischen Kombi und Kreißsaal (Zur Geschichte der DDR-Frauen)* (1990, Berlin), pp. 5–7.

51. Irene Dölling, 'Gespaltenes Bewußtsein-Frauen-und Männerbilder in der DDR'. In: Helwig *et al.*, *Frauen*, pp. 23–52.

52. Ibid., pp. 30–52.

53. *Grüne Reihe* 2/1988, p. 48; see also Ellen Vogt, 'Inhalt und Struktur von Geschlechtsrollenbildern in Schulbüchern der unteren Klassen' In: *Grüne Reihe* 4/1984.

54. Anita Grandke, 'Rechtsfragen der Stellung und Förderung der Frau in der DDR'. In: *Grüne Reihe*, 2/1976, pp. 12–13.

55. Änne Kossak, *Frauenpolitik und Frauenforschung in der DDR*, Magisterarbeit TU Berlin (1996), p. 86.

56. Susanne Diemer, *Patriarchalismus in der DDR – Strukturelle, kulturelle und subjektive Dimensionen der Geschlechterpolarisierung* (Opladen, 1994), pp. 406–7.

57. Dölling, 'Hoffnung und Hilflosigkeit', p. 99; Samirah Kenawi, ' "Aufstieg einer Problemgruppe" – Themen und Taktikwechsel der ostdeutschen Frauenbewegung', p. 107. In: Zentrum für interdisziplinäre Frauenforschung der HUB, ed., *Unter Hammer und Zirkel-Frauenbiographien vor dem Hintergrund ostdeutscher Sozialisationserfahrungen* (Berlin, 1995), pp. 103–11.

58. Dölling, 'Hoffnung und Hilflosigkeit', pp. 97–8; Boyer *et al.*, 'Sozial- und Konsumpolitik', p. 590.

59. SAPMO DO4/1015, April 1989, 'Stellungnahmen zum Pädagogischen Kongress'.

60. Heike Ellermann, Kathrin Klatt, *Bundesdeutsche Hausfrau? – Nie im Leben! – Eine Studie zum Selbstverständnis von Frauen in Ost und West* (Berlin, 1995), pp. 121–3; Dölling, 'Gespaltenes Bewusstsein', p. 49.

61. Ellermann *et al.*, *Bundesdeutsche Hausfrau?*, p. 121; Christiane Schenk, 'Zum Politik- und Feminismusverständnis ostdeutscher Frauen', p. 63. In: Ilse Nagelschmidt, ed., *Frauenleben, Frauenliteratur, Frauenkultur in der DDR der 70er und 80er Jahre* (Leipzig, 1997), pp. 56–64.

62. SAPMO DY30 IV2/2.042/6, p. 152.

63. Winkler, *Frauenreport'90*, p. 150.

64. Sabine Berghahn, Andrea Fritzsche, *Frauenrecht in Ost und West Deutschland-Bilanz – Ausblick* (Berlin, 1991), pp. 40–2.

65. Winkler, *Frauenreport'90*, p. 143.

66. Ibid., pp. 138–40.

67. Edwards, *GDR Society*, p. 72.

68. Winkler, *Frauenreport'90*, p. 79. In the 1980s *c*. 91% of all women were working and *c*. 90% of all women had given birth to at least one child.

69. SAPMO DY30 IV2/2.042/6, 'Parteiinternes Material, Referat zur Beratung der Bezirksleitung der SED Karl-Marx-Stadt 20.1.1972', p. 19.

70. Ibid., p. 24.

71. Ibid., p. 25.

72. Dölling, 'Gespaltenes Bewußtsein', pp. 26–7; see also Ellermann *et al.*, *Bundesdeutsche Hausfrau?*, p. 125.

73. Barbara Bertram, *Auszug aus dem Forschungsbericht der Studie 'Leistung und Lebensweise junger Frauen in der DDR'* (Leipzig, 1986), pp. 9–11.

74. Winkler, *Frauenreport'90*, p. 153; see also Ursula Strzodka, 'Zum Frauenbild – Anspruch und eigene Erfahrung', p. 56. In: *Grüne Reihe*, 3/1989 (Berlin), pp. 56–63.

75. Winkler, *Frauenreport'90*, p. 163.

76. Ibid., p. 153.

77. Heiner Müller, *Krieg ohne Schlacht. Leben in zwei Diktaturen. Eine Autobiographie.* Kiepenheuer&Witsch (Cologne, 1992), p. 113.

78. ACDP   7-13-3304,   7.11.1973,   'Entwicklung   der   Lebens-   und Schaffensbedingungen der Schriftsteller'.

79. SAPMO DY30 IV B 2/9.06/29, 1.11.1976, Verlag Neues Leben to Ragwitz; see also DY30 IV B 2/9.06/26, 18.4.1977, Krenz to Ragwitz.

80. See 2.4.1971 (ZAA 941/2, p. 229) Stiftung Archiv der AdK, *Zwischen Diskussion und Disziplin – Dokumente zur Geschichte der Akademie der Künste (Ost) 1945/50–1993* (Berlin, 1997), p. 344.

81. Denis Tate, 'Keeping the Biermann Affair in Perspective. Repression, Resistance and the Articulation of Despair in the Cultural Life of the Honecker Era', p. 7. In: Robert Atkins, Martin Kane, eds, *Retrospect und Review – Aspects of the Literatur of the GDR 1976–1990* (Amsterdam, Atlanta, 1997), pp. 1–15.

82. See Andrea Jäger, 'Schriftsteller aus der DDR – Ausbürgerungen und Über-siedlungen von 1961–89'. In: *Schriften zur Europa-und Deutschlandforschung* (Frankfurt/M., 1995), pp. 77–80.

83. Arnold *et al.*, 'Außenansichten', pp. 27–9.

84. In the case of Sarah Kirsch, the decision to leave the GDR was not solely based on the treatment of Wolf Biermann. See Marcel Reich-Ranicki, 'Der Droste jüngere Schwester – Über die Lyrik der Sarah Kirsch', p. 3. In: *FAZ*, 17.5.1980.

85. Christa Wolf in conversation with Frauke Meyer-Gosau, 1982 cited by Sonja Hilzinger ' "Avantgarde ohne Hinterland" – Zur Wiederentdeckung des Romantischen in Prosa und Essayistik der DDR'. In: Heinz Ludwig Arnold, Frauke Meyer-Gosau, eds, *Literatur in der DDR–Rückblicke* (Munich, 1991), p. 93.

86. BStU MfS HA XX 292, 2.10.1987, p. 41.

87. Ibid., p. 42: 'The person, who shows and behaves himself as an obstinate enemy of our social order, must be treated as such.'

88. Reiner Kunze, *Deckname 'Lyrik' – Eine Dokumentation von Reiner Kunze* (Frankfurt/M., 1990).

89. BStU MfS Rechtsstelle 831, 19.12.1974, 'Erziehung kriminell gefährdeter Bürger', p. 4.

90. BStU MfS-JHS20133, pp. 7, 40–3.

91. SAPMO DY30 IV B 2/2.024/99, 23.5.1979, Wolf to Hager.

92. See for example: SAPMO DY30 IV B 2/2.024/89 (file on Heym in Hager's office) including a letter from Heym, 2.7.1979, to the Berlin branch of the SV regarding denunciations in the ND and a letter from the 'Prorektors für Gesellschaftswissenschaften' at HUB to Hager, 12.6.1980, regarding a reading by Heym that was stopped after 20 minutes.

93. SAPMO DY30 J IV 2/9.06/10, 15.12.1981, 'Information zum zweiten Tag der "Begegnung zur Friedensförderung" ', p. 1.

94. SAPMO DY 30 vorl. SED 41890, 15.8.1988, AG Kirchenfragen, p. 1.

95. Werner Krusche cited in Detlef Pollack, Hagen Findeis, *Selbstbewahrung oder Selbstverlust-Bischöfe und Repräsentanten der evangelischen Kirchen in der DDR über ihr Leben (17 Interviews)* (Berlin, 1999), p. 30.

96. Goeckel, *The Lutheran Church*, p. 33 Discussion relates to Article 39.2 of the 1968 constitution.

97. Krusche cited in Pollack *et al.*, *Selbstbewahrung oder Selbstverlust*, p. 31.

98. Goeckel, *The Lutheran Church*, pp. 155, 226, 228.

99. SAPMO DY30 IVB2/14/51, 'Meinungen christlicher Bürger zum Entwurf Jugendgesetz'.
100. SAPMO DY30 IVB2/14/51, KKL (9.10.1973), p. 14; Catholic Bishops (21.9.1973), p. 7.
101. Dieter Reiher, 'Konfliktfeld Kirche-Schule in der DDR 1969 bis 1989', p. 117–18. In: Dähn *et al.*, '*Und führe uns nicht in Versuchung*', pp. 114–33.
102. SAPMO DO4/710 1975, '3.Tagung der 2.Bundessynode des BEK 26–30.9.1975, Tätigkeitsbericht der Konferenz der Kirchenleitungen', p. 3.
103. Horst Dohle, 'Der 6. März 1978. Zur Vorgeschichte, Interessenlage, Vorbereitung, Verlauf und Auswirkungen', p. 29. In: *Berliner Dialog-Hefte*, 2/1998 (35) (Berlin, 1998), pp. 21–34.
104. SAPMO DO4/710, 14.2.1985, Statements by the BEK 1976–84, pp. 11–17.
105. SAPMO DO4/537, 15.6.1979, 'Landeskirchenmusiktage 10–14.6.1979', p. 3.
106. SAPMO DO4/807, 'Jugendarbeit der evangelischen Kirchen', p. 12.
107. SAPMO DO4/601, p. 1.
108. SAPMO DY 30 vorl. SED 41896, 4.11.1988, talks between M.Stolpe and K.Löffler, p. 4; see also DO 4/712, p. 1.
109. SAPMO DO 4/959, 19.5.1989, p. 5.
110. SAPMO IV B2/14/19, 13.8.1988, pp. 1–3; DO 4/1246, 24.10.1980, talk between Schönherr and Gysi: 'Bishop Schönherr was very concerned (*as almost always*) […] He immediately promised compliance with legislation regarding Western media (*once again*) (notes in italics by Gysi).
111. SAPMO DO4/712, 25.5.1987, 'Gespräch des Staatssekretärs mit der KKL am 21.5.1987', p. 4: 'then one could register a reserve of state institutions, which the Church can only interpret as helplessness'.
112. SAPMO DY30 vorl.SED/41896, 4.11.1988, 'Gespräch mit Manfred Stolpe', p. 4, 'Löffler formulated the vigorous protests of the government of the GDR.'; DY30 vorl. SED/41890, 16.5.1989, 'Zu Lage in den evangelischen Kirchen', p. 7.
113. SAPMO DO4/710, p. 17, '6.Tagung der Synode der Evangelischen Kirche Berlin-Brandenburg, 6–11.4.1984, Bericht der Kirchenleitung Teil II'.
114. SAPMO DO4/712, 25.5.1987, p. 8, 'Gespräch des Staatssekretärs mit der KKL am 21.5.1987': 'Genosse Gysi rejected consequently the Churches' right to represent all citizens and asked the representatives of the KKL to prevent the Churches' political exploitation.'
115. SAPMO DY30 vorl.SED/35486, 2.4.1984, 'Gespräch Gysi und Vorstand der Konferenz der Evangelischen Kirchenleitungen der BEK, 30.3.1984', p. 4.
116. The more centralised structure of the Catholic Church in the GDR made relations to the state, although not easier but more defined.
117. BStU MfS HAXX/AKG5819, p. 154.
118. See Chapter 6 for an analysis of the attitudes within the MfS towards women.
119. BStU MfS HAIX/9231, p. 233.
120. Emmerich, *Literaturgeschichte*, p. 63.
121. BStU MfS HAIX/9231, p. 244.
122. BStU MfS-HAXX/AKG1513, June 1989, F. Rupprecht, K.-H. Thieme, 'Probleme des sozialistischen Bewusstseins'.
123. See Kurt Hager. In: Hertle *et al.*, *Götterdämmerung*, Track 28.
124. Arnold *et al.*, 'Das Große Haus', pp. 36–7.

125. Staadt, *Eingaben*, p. 6; see also SAPMO DY30/2200, 28.9.1976, 'Probleme aus dem Monatsbericht des Genossen Naumann'. The same file from Honecker's office contains various reports on the economic situation, including notes on problems and shortcomings.

126. Hanna Behrend, 'Frauenemanzipation made in GDR', p. 44. In: Birgit Bütow, Heidi Stecker, eds, *EigenArtige Ostfrauen – Frauenemanzipation in der DDR und den neuen Bundesländern* (Bielefeld, 1994), pp. 32–49.

127. See Alan L. Nothnagle, *Building the East German Myth-Historical Mythologie and Youth Propaganda in the GDR, 1945–89* (Michigan, 1999), chapter 3 for an in-depth analysis of the crucial role of the anti-fascist myth for the stability of the GDR.

128. BLA-BPA IVC-2/9.01/540, 8.10.1974, 'Probleme der Partei-und Massenarbeit der Grundorganisationen, September 1974', p. 6.

129. SAPMO DY30 vorl.SED/32710 In addition to those measures, the regime also sold parts of its cultural heritage in the form of antique books. See SAPMO DY30 vorl.SED/34868, 10.7.1985, 'Oberstes Gericht, Der Präsident' to Löffler.

130. Irena Kukutz, Katja Havemann, *Geschützte Quelle-Gespräche mit Monika H. alias Karin Lenz* (Berlin, 1990), p. 25 Criticising in particular the lack of initiative of the MfS: 'THEY-MUST-REACT-TO-US'.

131. SAPMO DO4/587, 1979, 'Schriftsteller und Sänger in kirchlicher Arbeit mit Jugendlichen', p. 1.

3   State Institutions

1. M. Rainer Lepsius, 'Die Institutionenordnung als Rahmenbedingung der Sozialgeschichte der DDR'. In: Kaelble *et al.*, *Sozialgeschichte*, p. 17.

2. Eckart, *So sehe ick die Sache*, p. 66.

3. Gaus, 'Nischengesellschaft'.

4. Lepsius, 'Institutionenordnung', p. 18.

5. See Pollack's system theory approach. Moses *et al.*, 'Rewriting the East German History', pp. 243–5.

6. Lepsius, 'Institutionenordnung', pp. 25–6.

7. Dorothee Wierling, 'Konflikte in der Erziehungsdiktatur der sechziger Jahre'. In: Kaelble *et al.*, *Sozialgeschichte*, p. 423.

8. SAPMO DO4/778, 9.2.1989, *Junge Welt*.

9. Cited in Sillge, *Un-Sichtbare Frauen*, p. 83.

10. DIPF/BBF/Archiv 15.010, April 1988, 'Erziehung Informelle Gruppen', p. 23.

11. Ibid., p. 22.

12. ACDP 7-13-3152, CDU, 'Abteilung Kirchenfragen, 25.11.1982', p. 4; see also BStU MfS-HAXX2416, 26.4.1984 'Politisch – operative Lage unter jugendlichen Personenkreisen', p. 64.

13. Freiburg *et al.*, *FDJ*, p. 344.

14. SAPMO DY6/3952, 15.3.1980, 'Jugendklubs', pp. 3–4, 9.

15. DIPF/BBF/Archiv 15.010, April 1988, 'Erziehung Informelle Gruppen', p. 20.

16. Edwards, *GDR Society*, p. 129.

17. SAPMO DY6/3952, 15.3.1980, 'Jugendklubs', p. 3.

18. See for example SAPMO DY30 IV2/2.036/1, pp. 113–38, 171.

19. Ibid., p. 119.

20. SAPMO DY30 vorl.SED/35486, 23.8.1984, 'Analyse der kirchlichen Kinder- und Jugendarbeit im Bezirk Magdeburg', p. 25.

21. BStU MfS KD Dresden-Stadt 64136, 30.4.1984, 'Politisch–operative Lage in Konzentrationspunkten der Arbeiterklasse mit einem hohen Anteil Jugendlicher', p. 9.

22. SAPMO DY30 IV2/2.036/2, p. 132; see also membership numbers, which dipped in the 1978–80 but were driven up again in the early 1980s. In: Zilch, *Millionen unter der Blauen Fahne*, pp. 14–15.

23. Bähr, *Wir denken erst seit Gorbatschow*, p. 24.

24. BStU MfS-HAXX2416, 26.4.1984, 'Politisch–operative Lage unter jugendlichen Personenkreisen', p. 65.

25. Anne Hampele, ' "Arbeite mit, plane mit, regiere mit" – Zur politischen Partizipation von Frauen in der DDR', p. 290 In: Helwig *et al.*, *Frauen*, pp. 281–320.

26. See for example SAPMO DO4/1396, 6.9.1988, 'Vermerk für den Staatssekretär', p. 1, signed Wilke He indicated that Klaus Gysi showed a reluctance to confront Margot Honecker.

27. Cited in Michalzik, *An der Seite der Genossen*, p. 133.

28. SAPMO DY30 vorl.SED/19662, 'Rede Margot Honecker, 30.9.1976', pp. 1–2.

29. ACDP 7-13-3304, 23.10.1978, Gerald Götting to M. Honecker.

30. SAPMO DY30 vorl.SED/35037, 30.10.1984, 'Weiterentwicklung und Führung des Unterrichts', p. 5; see also 'Schulordnung vom 29.11.1979' cited in Dähn *et al.*, *'Und führe uns nicht in Versuchung*, p. 119.

31. SAPMO DO4/795, 19.11.1981, 'Gespräch Ullmann, mit Hempel und Domsch am 17.11.1981', p. 2.

32. Gerhardt Neuner, 'Erziehung des "neuen Menschen" – Licht und Schatten', p. 197. In: Modrow, *Das Große Haus von außen*, pp. 196–222.

33. See Hans-Joachim Hoffmann (11.10.1991), cited in Brigitte Zimmermann, Hans-Dieter Schütt, *'ohnMacht' – DDR – Funktionäre sagen aus* (Berlin, 1992), p. 118. 'The heads of departments by the ZK of the SED tended to behave as super-ministers [Überminister], except with regard to the people's education sector, of course.'

34. SAPMO DY30 IV B 2/9.06/56, 'Struktur der Abteilung Kultur, 10.1.1980'.

35. SAPMO DY30 vorl.SED/14337, 8.8.1974, 'Struktur- und Funktionsplan vom 1.10.1974', p. 1.

36. Ibid., pp. 4–5, 13–14; SAPMO DY30 vorl.SED/18032, *c.* 1975, 'Struktur des Amtes für Jugendfragen', p. 5.

37. SAPMO DY30 vorl.SED/18032, 'Beratung mit den leitenden Genossen des Amtes für Jugendfragen am 24.9.1975', p. 17.

38. SAPMO DY30 vorl.SED/26797, 1979, 'Erhöhung des Anteils weiblicher Leitungskader', pp. 1–2.

39. SAPMO, DY30 vorl.SED/16716, 4.7.1974, 'Arbeitsplan der Abteilung Frauen, 2/1974', p. 9.

40. Ibid., see various work plans and reports 1972–74, in particular 'Arbeitsplan für 1/1973, 23.1.1973', p. 3.

41. SAPMO DY30 vorl.SED/16733/2 All reports of the DFD, including financial revision, were handed to the 'Abteilung Frauen'.

42. SAPMO DY30 vorl.SED/16716, 4.7.1974, 'Arbeitsplan der Abteilung Frauen, 2/1974', p. 2.

43. Ibid., work plans and reports, 1972–74. See also SAPMO DY30 vorl.SED/ 16718, Lange's correspondence with the 'Wissenschaftlichen Beirat zur Stellung der Frau in der sozialistischen Gesellschaft', period 1972–74.

44. See for example: SAPMO DY30 vorl.SED/26797, 20.9.1979, 'Arbeit und Entwicklung der sozialistischen Frauenorganisation', signed 'E.H., 24.9.1979'; DY30 JIV2/17/14, 5.10.1981, 'Information an Honecker bez. rückgängige Geburtenentwicklung', commented by E. Honecker; DY30 vorl.SED/36879, 28.3.1984, 'Entwicklung des Anteils der Frauen in Leitungsfunktionen' speech by E. Honecker addressing 1st district secretaries of the SED; DY30 IV2/2.042/32, p. 122, 'Auflistung der Genossinnen (Anteile) in der Partei an E.Honecker'; DY30 IV2/2.042/33, p. 145, Lange cites E. Honecker's speech addressing 1st district secretaries of the SED, 1.2.1985

45. Barbara Einhorn, *Cinderella Goes to Market – Citizenship, Gender and Women's Movements in East Central Europe* (London, New York, 1993), p. 274; for detailed statistics see Winkler, *Frauenreport'90.*

46. SAPMO DY30 IV2/2.042/30, p. 59; DY30 IV2/2.042/32, p. 307; in 1984, around 40% of the seats in local political bodies were taken by women (42.6% in 'Kreistage und Stadtverordneten – versammlungen der Stadtkreise').

47. SAPMO DY30 IV2/2.042/32, p. 284.

48. Ibid., pp. 284–6.

49. See members of the 'Sektion Literatur und Sprachpflege' in the AdK, 1971–89. In: Stiftung Archiv der AdK, ed., *Verzeichnis der Mitglieder der Berliner Akademie der Künste – 1696–1996* (Berlin, 1997).

50. Interview with H. Kant, late 1970s, cited in Atkins *et al.*, *Retrospect und Review*, pp. ii.

51. SAdK, Berlin, Sektion Literatur und Sprachpflege: 1011, 13.1.1983, pp. 34–5.

52. Ibid.: 892, 4.5.1978, p. 101.

53. SAPMO DY30 vorl.SED/36879, 26.5.1983, 'Aussprachen mit weiblichen Hochschulkadern', p. 6, Appendix 2: socialist economy, without agriculture and forestry – 1978: 30.9%; 1980: 31.4%; 1982: 30.1% A decline was noted particularly within industry and 'other sectors'. Appendix 2a: Ministries of Industry – 1978: 19.6%; 1980: 19.2%; 1982: 18.9%.

54. Ibid., p. 3.

55. See Kolinsky, *Women in 20th century Germany*, p. 143; Nancy Lukens, Dorothy Rosenberg, eds, *Daughters of Eve – Women's Writing from the GDR* (Lincoln, London, 1993), p. 5.

56. SAPMO DY 30 vorl.SED 16707, 31.5.1973, Lange an Politburo, pp. 1–3; DY 30 J IV 2/17/8 training courses 1979, 1981, and 1983.

57. SAPMO DY30 IV2/2.042/6, 'Referat zur Beratung der Bezirksleitung der SED Karl-Marx-Stadt 20.1.1972'; DY30 IV2/2.042/6, p. 122; DY30 IV2/2.042/7, pp. 18–20; DY30 IV2/2.042/7, pp. 74ff; DY30 vorl.SED 26790, 11.2.1976, 'Frauenförderungspläne'; DY30 vorl.SED 36878, 12.1.1981, Consultation on women in leading positions; DY30 IV 2/2.042/46, 26.8.1987, Women in leadership positions in central and local government.

58. Inge Lange, *Frauen in der DDR* (Berlin, 1974), p. 77.

59. See Chapter 5 for a detailed discussion of the regime's patriarchal tendencies.

60. SAPMO DY30 IV2/2.042/27, pp. 8–10; DY30 IV2/2.042/29, pp. 119–36.

61. See SAPMO DY30 IV 2/2.042/7, p. 21.
62. See for various work programmes of the 'Abteilung Frauen' during the 1970s: SAPMO DY30 vorl.SED/16716 (1972–74); DY30 vorl. SED/26802 (1975–77); DY30 vorl.SED/26903 (1978–79).
63. Einhorn, *Cinderella Goes to Market*, p. 186.
64. Bühler, *Mythos Gleichberechtigung*, pp. 57–8.
65. Ibid., p. 63.
66. Julia Teschner, 'DFD: Socialist Mass Organisation and Western Charity?'. In: Elizabeth Boa, Janet Wharton, eds, *Women and the Wende: Social Effects and Cultural Reflections of the German Unification Process* (Amsterdam, Atlanta, 1994), p. 54.
67. SAPMO DY30 vorl.SED/26791, 7.2.1975, 'Neugewählte Kreis-, Stadt-, Stadtbezirksvorstände'.
68. SAPMO DY30 vorl.SED/36868, 15.02.1982, 'Neugewählte Kreis-, Stadt- und Stadtbezirksvorstände, Revisionskommissionen', p. 1.
69. SAPMO DY30 JIV2/17/1, 13.5.1985, 'Diesjährige Wahlen zu den Gruppenvorständen des DFD', p. 2. Lange indicated the strong tendency to re-elect functionaries.
70. Teschner, 'DFD', p. 55.
71. See SAPMO DY30 vorl.SED 26791, p. 194; DY30 vorl.SED/16707, 11.7.1972, 'Wahlen zu den Vorständen des DFD', Appendix 5.
72. SAPMO DY30 vorl.SED/36883, 7.1.1982, 'Studienjahr 1981/82 der Frauenakademien', p. 2. Housewives were represented with 43.7%. The seminar courses attracted over 86,000 women. They showed a clear ideological orientation.
73. SAPMO DY30 IV2/2.042/30, p. 144.
74. SAPMO DY31/531, 23.2.198, 'Referat Ilse Thiele', p. 16.
75. SAPMO DY 30 IV 2/2.042/30, pp. 144–6.
76. SAPMO DY30 vorl.SED/16707, 5.3.1973, 'Information für das Politbüro', p. 2.
77. SAPMO DY30 vorl.SED/26771, 19.4.1978, 'Informationsbericht'; DO4/1470, 25.10.1988, 'Arbeit mit christlichen Frauen 1987, 1988'.
78. See Hampele, 'Arbeite mit, plane mit, regiere mit', pp. 300–9.
79. Bühler, *Mythos Gleichberechtigung*, pp. 69–70.
80. SAPMO DY30 vorl.SED/26771, 19.12.1979, 'Informationsbericht', p. 3.
81. Rita Pawlowski cited in Hampele, 'Arbeite mit, plane mit, regiere mit', p. 299.
82. SAPMO DY31/244, 16.11.1989.
83. See Dölling, 'Gespaltenes Bewusstsein', p. 29.
84. Relevant ZIJ surveys are cited by Uta Falck, *VEB Bordell-Geschichte der Prostitution in der DDR* (Berlin, 1998), p. 94; see also Annette Maennel, *Auf sie war Verlaß-Frauen und Stasi* (Berlin, 1995); regarding the regime's interest in the concept of 'Geborgenheit' see Boyer *et al.*, 'Sozial- und Konsumpolitik', p. 577.
85. Dorle Zilch, 'Wer war die FDJ? Untersuchungen zur demographischen, sozialen und politischen Struktur der Mitglieder des Jugendverbandes der DDR-einschliesslich seiner Funktionäre', p. 222. In: Heiner Timmermann, ed., *Diktaturen in Europa im 20.Jahrhundert-der Fall DDR* (Berlin, 1996), pp. 215–26.
86. Ellermann *et al.*, *Bundesdeutsche Hausfrau?*, p. 124.
87. SAPMO DY30 IV B 2/9.06/56, 10.1.1980, 'Struktur der Abteilung Kultur'.
88. SAPMO DY30 vorl.SED 18514, 26.3.1975, Peter Heldt to Kamnitzer; DY30 vorl.SED/42277 (1), Reports regarding meetings of the executive committees

in the SV, e.g. 'Sitzung des Präsidiums am 26.6.1985', were always sent to the 'Abteilung Kultur' and Kurt Hager. Both got repeatedly involved in problem situations. (Period 1980–89); DY30 vorl.SED 32785, 16.4.1981, Henryk Kreisch to Ragwitz; See also DY30 vorl.SED 18514, 4.12.1976, Ragwitz to Hager, pp. 1–2.

89. SAPMO DY30 J IV 2/9.06/10, 31.1.1979, 'Verhalten Erich Loest', p. 2; DY30 vorl.SED/32711/1, 28.1.1982, Ragwitz to Hager.

90. SAPMO DY30 IV B 2/2.024/88 See Franz Fühmann's extensive communications with the 'Abteilung Kultur', Hager and Kurt Löffler.

91. See Kant, *Abspann.*

92. SAPMO DY30 vorl.SED/32711/1, 28.1.1982, Ragwitz to Hager.

93. Christa Wolf, Franz Fühmann, *Monsieur-Wir finden uns wieder, Briefe 1968–1984* (Berlin, 1998), p. 41.

94. SAPMO DY30 vorl.SED/34868, 30.8.84, Höpcke to Hager, Appendix 2, p. 14

95. Hans-Ulrich Faure in conversation with H. Kant. In: *Börsenblatt*, 2.8.1991, p. 8; Interview with H.Kant for *Schweriner Volkszeitung*, 4.11.1994.

96. Kant, *Abspann*, pp. 404–5.

97. Christine Horn, 'Irrgarten. Über Zensur und Staatssicherheit'. In: Heinz Ludwig Arnold, ed., *Feinderklärung Literatur und Staatssicherheitsdienst* (Munich, 1993), p. 47; see also Lepsius, 'Institutionenordnung', p. 19.

98. Zimmermann *et al.*, *ohnMacht*, p. 118.

99. SAPMO DY30 IV B 2/2.024/75, 3.4.1974, Hager to Honecker; 25.3.1974, conversation Hager with Konrad Wolf on 21.3.1974.

100. BStU MfS-BdL/Dok6353, 24.4.1978, 'Gespräch Honecker mit Präsidiums des SV, 3. März 1978', p. 3.

101. SAPMO DY30 IV B 2/2.024/77, 25.5.1978, Hager to Konrad Naumann. This praxis was not new to Kant who had followed a similar procedure in 1973. See SAPMO DY30 IV B 2/9.06/57, 9.11.1973, Ragwitz to Hager.

102. Faure with Kant. In: *Börsenblatt*, 2.8.1991, p. 10: 'Congresses of the SV were events marked by a relative freedom of speech in a state, where freedom of speech was not immensely loved.'

103. Ibid., p. 5.

104. Vera Wollenberger, *Virus der Heuchler-Innenansicht aus Stasi-Akten* (Berlin, 1992), p. 18.

105. Cited in Emmerich, *Literaturgeschichte*, p. 44.

106. Erwin Strittmatter. In: SAdK, Sektion Literatur: 894/1, 13.4.1976, p. 125.

107. See Peter Huchel who, as chief-editor, published non-socialist modern texts by Sartre, Kafka and Proust but, as a result, was dismissed late in 1962.

108. SAdK Berlin, Sektion Literatur: 899/2, 14.3.1974; Mappe 3, 17.9.1974; 897: Mappe 2, 27.9.1979, p. 205.

109. SAdK, Sektion Literatur: 900/1, 1.2.1973, p. 17.

110. The graphic-lyric poetry portfolio *Kein Wind schlägt die Flügeltüren zu* (1979) was created within the AdK Dresden. However, the genre expanded and moved quickly outside official institutions. It provided the base for the important, mostly self-published and therefore uncensored, painter-poet books and magazines, which were circulated illegally.

111. Emmerich, *Literaturgeschichte*, p. 451.

112. See SAPMO DY30 IV B 2/9.06/29, 27.8.1979, Ragwitz to M. Honecker.

113. BStU JHS MF VVS279/82, p. 38.

114. SAPMO DY24/11273, p. 7.
115. See for example: SAPMO DY30 vorl.SED/32710, 17.5.1982, complaint by the director of the central entertainment; DY30 IV B 2/2.024/77, 13.8.1980, Hoffmann referring to Hager regarding Wolfgang Hilbig; DY30 IV B 2/2.024/89, 16.12.1980, Hoffmann informing Hager of Stefan Heym's circumvention of the 'Druckgenehmigungsverfahren'.
116. See for example BStU MfS-HAIX9231, 23.11.1976, 'Protokoll der Versammlung der PO des SV'; SAPMO DY30 IV B 2/9.06/41, 'Aussprache Hans-Joachim Hoffmann mit Präsidium der AdK, 24.11.1976'.
117. Emmerich, *Literaturgeschichte*, p. 454.
118. SAPMO DY30 vorl.SED 25884, 18.7.1977, Ragwitz to Hager, pp. 1–2; see also DY30 vorl.SED 32785, 16.4.1981, Henryk Keisch to Ragwitz.
119. SAPMO DY30 vorl.SED 18514, 4.12.1976, Ragwitz to Hager.
120. Ibid., 7.2.1974, 'Abteilung Finanzverwaltung und Parteibetriebe' to Kamnitzer.
121. *Frankfurter Rundschau*, 20.1.1995.
122. Friedrich Dieckmann on PEN In: *NDL*, 2/96.
123. In July 1979, *Weimarer Beiträge* published round-table interviews with young writers such as Uwe Kolbe.
124. Emmerich, *Literaturgeschichte*, p. 264.
125. Ibid., p. 52.
126. Horn, 'Irrgarten', p. 47.
127. See BStU MfS-HAX/AKG1427, p. 12.
128. BStU JHS MF VVS279/82, pp. 44–6.
129. Leeder, *Breaking Boundaries*, p. 34.
130. SAPMO DY30 vorl.SED/41889, 6.6.1986, Reschwamm to Gerhard Müller, p. 2.
131. SAPMO DO4/998, 23.5.1985, Gysi to Honecker.
132. Ibid.
133. See Arnold *et al.*, 'Außenansichten', pp. 34–6.
134. Besier *et al.*, *Pfarrer, Christen und Katholiken*, p. 30.
135. SAPMO DY30 IV B 2/14/9, 31.8.87 and 16.1.89, *AG Kirchenfragen.*
136. SAPMO DY30 IV2/2.036/40, pp. 183–5; see also Clemens Vollnhals, *Die kirchenpolitische Abteilung des MfS* (Berlin, 1997), p. 3.
137. See for example SAPMO DY30/2554, correspondence with Honecker's office in 1983.
138. Goeckel, *The Lutheran Church*, p. 36.
139. SAPMO DY30/424, CDU, 'Vorschläge zum VIII. Parteitages der SED'; see also DY30 vorl.SED/11516, CDU, '6. Plenums des ZK, Juli 1972'.
140. SAPMO DO4/578, 28.11.1973, ZR FDJ, 'Verlauf und die Ergebnisse der öffentlichen Diskussion zum Entwurf des Jugendgesetzes', p. 9.
141. SAPMO DY30 IVB2/14/51, pp. 14–16.
142. Peter Maser, ' "Beitrag zur Klärung der Grundfragen christlicher Existenz"? Zur Rolle der Ost – CDU an den Theologischen Fakultäten/Sektionen der DDR', p. 125. In: Peer Pasternack, ed., *Hochschule & Kirche. Theologie & Politik-Besichtigung eines Beziehungsgeflechts in der DDR* (Berlin, 1996), pp. 119–29.
143. ACDP 7–12–3289, 'Die Aufgaben des Union Verlages (1972)'.
144. Goeckel, *The Lutheran Church*, p. 37.
145. SAPMO DY30 vorl. SED/19740, 24.4.1973, 'Abweichende Stellungnahmen […] zum Bericht des Bezirkssekretariats Rostock', p. 2.

146. SAPMO DO4/1437 'Gespräch mit dem Staatssekretär für Kirchenfragen, 27.11.86', p. 5; see also BStU JHS GVS121/83, p. 12.
147. ACDP 7-13-3152, 25.11.1982, 'Abteilung Kirchenfragen', p. 2.
148. Ibid., pp. 1–4.
149. SAPMO DO4/601 'Weitere Arbeit mit religiös gebundenen Mitgliedern der FDJ, Frühjahr 1983', p. 1.
150. SAPMO DY24/14198, 8.6.1983, Krenz to E. Honecker.
151. Cited in Besier *et al.*, *Pfarrer, Christen und Katholiken*, p. 465.
152. ACDP 7-13-3142, 'Tagung der Frauenkommission, 24.5.1984', p. 2.
153. SAPMO DY30 IVB2/14/157, pp. 12–14, 19 Berliner Bischofskonferenz in Erfurt: 'Positions within the Churches demand, as valid symbols of unity and political freedom, no to accept political involvement of any kind' (June 1977).
154. Besier *et al.*, *Pfarrer, Christen und Katholiken*, pp. 440–1.
155. For a more detailed discussion, see Chapter 7.
156. Goeckel, *The Lutheran Church*, pp. 21–2.
157. See Haase *et al.*, *VEB-Nachwuchs*, pp. 21, 39, 85. See also Eckart, *So sehe ich*.

4 Diversity

1. Detlef Pollack, Dieter Rink, 'Einleitung', p. 8. In: Pollack *et al.*, *Zwischen Verweigerung und Opposition*, pp. 7–29.
2. Frank Thieme, *Die Sozialstruktur der DDR zwischen Wirklichkeit und Ideologie* (Frankfurt/Main, 1996), pp. 75, 77.
3. Huinink *et al.*, *Kollektiv und Eigensinn*, p. 19; see also Solga, *Klassenlose Gesellschaft.*
4. Dieter Voigt, Werner Voss, Sabine Meck, *Sozialstruktur der DDR* Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft (Darmstadt, 1987), p. 149.
5. Manfred Loetsch cited in: Thieme, *Die Sozialstruktur der DDR*, p. 80.
6. Weidig cited in ibid., p. 89.
7. Arnold *et al.*, 'Das Große Haus', pp. 33–5.
8. SAPMO DY31/1115, p. 162ff; DY30 IV2/2.042/59, Wulfram Speigner 'Untersuchungsergebnisse zu den in der Industrie beschäftigten Frauen', pp. 8–9; DY30 vorl.SED/26795/2, 9.12.1977, 'Frauenkommissionen bei den Bezirks-und Kreisvorständen des FDGB', p. 6.
9. SAPMO DY31/1115, p. 169.
10. DIPF/BBF/Archiv 13.069, pp. 160, 449; DIPF/BBF/Archiv 13.895, September 1982, Sabine Hoffmann *et al.*, 'Arbeits-, Alltags- und politischen Erfahrungen von Schülern', p. 92.
11. DIPF/BBF/Archiv 13.895, September 1982, Sabine Hoffmann *et al.*, 'Arbeits, Alltags-und politischen Erfahrungen von Schülern', pp. 92, 94; DIPF/BBF/Archiv 15.010, Bilanzmaterial 2.3.2., June 1988, J. Dross, G. Hemling, 'Wie wird die FDJ von den Schülern real erlebt? [...]', pp. 6, 9.
12. Leonhard Lorek, 'Ciao! Von der Anspruchslosigkeit der Kapitulation', pp. 114–15. In: Peter Böthig, Klaus Michael, eds, *Machtspiele-Literatur und Staatssicherheit im Fokus Prenzlauer Berg* (Leipzig, 1993), pp. 112–28.
13. Dorothea Ortmann, *Christa Wolfs 'Kindheitsmuster' als Beitrag zur individuellen Faschismusauseinandersetzung für Christliche Leser* (Essen, 1987), p. 12;

Churches organised mass events that would enable Christians to feel part of a bigger community: SAPMO DO4/672, Olaf Klohr *et al.*, 'Kirchenstudie 1981', p. 78; SAPMO DO4/673, Klohr *et al.*, 'Kirchenstudie 1983', p. 1.

14. Goeckel, *The Lutheran Church*, pp. 253–4.
15. EZA 101/542, 4.1.1982, 'Positionspapier der Evangelischen Frauenhilfe'
16. SAPMO DY30 vorl.SED/26802, 'Arbeitspläne 1975–77'.
17. Herta Kuhrig in: Kossak, *Frauenpolitik*, p. 86.
18. SAPMO DY30 vorl. SED/26794 (2), 11.12.1975, Meinungsforschungsinstitut, p. 4.
19. Ibid., p. 6.
20. SAPMO DY30 IV 2/2.042/59, Speigner, 'Untersuchungsergebnisse zu den in der Industrie beschäftigten Frauen', p. 9; SAPMO DY31/1115, pp. 175–6.
21. SAPMO DY31/1115, pp. 169–70.
22. SAPMO DY30 IV 2/2.042/33, p. 126.
23. Ibid., pp. 128–9.
24. SAPMO DY30 IV 2/2.042/30, pp. 79 and 81 (numbers given for 'Arbeiter und Angestellte' only).
25. SAPMO DY30 vorl.SED 16707, 31.5.1973, 'Abteilung Frauen an Politbüro', p. 2.
26. Ellermann *et al.*, *Bundesdeutsche Hausfrau?*, p. 121.
27. SAPMO DY30 vorl.SED/26797, 1979, 'Abteilung Frauen zur Erhöhung des Anteils weiblicher Leitungskader'.
28. SAPMO DY30 IV 2/2.042/32, pp. 286ff.
29. Christa Wolf, 'Berührung. Ein Vorwort', p. 19. In: Maxie Wander, *Guten Morgen, du Schöne* (Munich, 1997), pp. 11–22.
30. Ilse Nagelschmidt, 'Frauenliteratur der siebziger Jahre als "Brennspiegel" der Widersprüche und Ambivalenzen weiblicher Emanzipation in der DDR', pp. 68–71. In: Bütow *et al.*, *EigenArtige Ostfrauen*, pp. 63–74; Brigitte Young, *Triumph of the Fatherland – German Unification and the Marginalization of Women* (Michigan, 1999), p. 70.
31. Irmtraud Morgner, *Amanda – Ein Hexenroman* Aufbau Taschenbuchverlag (Berlin, 1999), pp. 228–9.
32. SAPMO DY30 vorl.SED/32700, 28.9.1983, 'Sitzungen des Präsidiums/ Vorstandes des SV, 21.–22.9.1983', p. 5.
33. Emmerich, *Literaturgeschichte*, chapter 6; See also Wirth, 'Christliche Literatur', p. 56.
34. Kant, *Abspann*, p. 417.
35. Bathrick, *The Powers of Speech*, p. 231.
36. Günter de Bruyn in *Die Zeit*, 7.9.1990.
37. SAPMO DY30 vorl.SED/32700, Abteilung Kultur, 29.5.1981, p. 8; see also Emmerich, *Literaturgeschichte*, p. 54.
38. Müller, *Krieg ohne Schlacht*, p. 184.
39. Wolf *et al.*, *Monsieur*, p. 41, Wolf to Fühmann, 6.9.1977.
40. Incident cited by Hellmuth Karasek in *Der Spiegel*, 25.6.1990.
41. SAPMO DY30 IV B 2/2.024/77, p. 4; DY30 vorl.SED/42311/2, 1.5.1986; see also Emmerich, *Literaturgeschichte*, p. 451.
42. See appeal by Christa Wolf on East German TV on 8.11.1989 cited in *Der Spiegel* 45/1999, p. 90; see also speeches of artists and intellectuals at the demonstration from 4.11.1989 in Berlin (Alexanderplatz) extracts cited in

Bernd Lindner, *Die demokratische Revolution in der DDR 1989/90* (Bonn, 1998), pp. 95–7.

43. Wollenberger, *Virus der Heuchler*, p. 18.
44. Emmerich, *Literaturgeschichte*, p. 406, approx. 300 painters and graphic artists, 35 writers in 1987.
45. Sylvia Klötzer, '(Sub)kultur und Staatssicherheit: Rainer Schedlinski', p. 52. In: Christina Cosentino, Wolfgang Müller, eds, '*im widerstand/im missverstand?' Zur Literatur und Kunst des Prenzlauer Bergs* (New York, 1995), pp. 51–74; See Brigitte Dahlke, *Papierboot-Autorinnen aus der DDR-inoffiziell publiziert* (Würzburg, 1997), p. 26.
46. For an insight into the ambivalence of the Prenzlauer Berg, see: Adolf Endler, *Tarzan am Prenzlauer Berg* (1994); for examples of their work see Geist, *Molotow-Cocktail.*
47. Dahlke, *Papierboot*, p. 22.
48. Cited in Leeder, *Breaking Boundaries*, p. 28.
49. Ibid., p. 9.
50. Gabriele Stötzer, 'Frauenszene und Frauen in der Szene', p. 133. In: Böthig *et al.*, *Machtspiele*, pp. 129–35; see also Birgit Dahlke, 'Spurensicherung-Autorinnen aus der DDR und der Einschnitt 1989', p. 47. In: Ulrike Diedrich, Heidi Stecker, eds, *Veränderungen-Identitätsfindung im Prozeß, Frauenforschung im Jahre Sieben nach der Wende* (Bielefeld, 1997), pp. 45–53.
51. Dahlke, 'Spurensicherung', p. 45.
52. *Lila Band* – Dresden 1987, *Frau anders* – Jena January 1989, *Frauenblätter* – Leipzig Dezember 1989, *Das Netz*-Dresden 1988.
53. Dahlke, *Papierboot*, pp. 26–8.
54. 'Geschichtsforum' 30.5.1999 (Berlin) (http://www.zzf-pdm.de/archiv/gforum/ – 2.4.2001): Durs Grünbein in panel discussion on GDR literature stressed his personal disinterest in politics, especially with regard to his own history in the GDR.
55. BStU MfS-HAVIII1082 (5–13), 7.7.1986, 'Mittig an alle Diensteinheiten', p. 3; SAPMO DO4/807, 20.5.1987, Röfke, 'Gruppen von Jugendlichen mit auffälligem Sozialverhalten'.
56. BStU MfS-HAIX 772; BStU JHS21097, p. 13.
57. SAPMO DO4/767, p. 203.
58. SAPMO DY30 IVB2/14/19, 13.1.1988, Jarowinsky to Honecker, p. 2.
59. ACDP 7-13-3259, 9.3.1988, Episcopus Berolinensis.
60. SAPMO DO4/712, 6.7.1988, 'Thesen zum Gespräch von Kleinert mit Leich'.
61. See for example: BStU MfS-HA IX 1955, 25.9.1974; BStU MfS-HA IX 444, November 1983.
62. BStU JHS 21097, pp. 12–13.
63. Ibid., p. 16.
64. Gordon Charles Ross, *The Swastika in Socialism – Right-Wing Extremism in the GDR*, unpublished thesis (1999), pp. 165–6.
65. Ibid., pp. 112–13 GDR; see also BStU MfS HAIX 9232, p. 164 and BStU JHS 21186, p. 33.
66. Cited in Gisela Helwig, *Jugend und Familie in der DDR: Leitbild und Alltag im Widerspruch* (Cologne, 1984), p. 15.
67. Cited in Haase *et al.*, *VEB-Nachwuchs*, p. 58.
68. Cited in Helwig, *Jugend und Familie*, p. 15.

69. Ross, *Swastika*, p. 99.
70. Matze (18) cited in Haase *et al.*, *VEB-Nachwuchs*, pp. 56–7.
71. Werner Henning, Walter Friedrich, *Jugend in der DDR-Daten und Ergebnisse der Jugendforschung vor der Wende* (Weinheim, Munich, 1991), p. 12; Walter Friedrich, 'Zur inhaltlichen und methodischen Forschung am ZIJ Leipzig'. In: Evelyn Brislinger, Brigitte Hausstein, Eberhard Riedel, eds, *Jugend im Osten-Sozialwissenschaftliche Daten und Kontextnissen aus der DDR sowie den neuen Bundesländern, 1969–95* (Berlin, 1997), pp. 87, 99; Walter Friedrich *et al.*, *Das Zentralinstitut für Jugendforschung in Leipzig 1966–90. Geschichte, Methoden, Erkenntnisse* (Berlin, 1999), introduction.
72. Michalzik, *An der Seite der Genossen*, p. 257. Michalzik underestimated the concern of the institute's employees to conduct objective and scientifically valuable studies.
73. See Appendix.
74. ZIJ (A 87).
75. Heinz Niemann, *Meinungsforschung in der DDR. Die geheimen Berichte des Instituts für Meinungsforschung an das Politbüro der SED* (Cologne, 1993), p. 67
76. Gisela Thiele, 'Das Verhältnis junger und älterer Werktätiger zur Arbeit – ein Exkurs zum Thema Altersbesonderheiten', ZIJ (Leipzig, 1988) pp. 35–6.
77. SAPMO DY30 vorl.SED/32746, 1981, 'Zur ideologischen Situation unter jungen Schriftstellern', p. 2.
78. Siegfried cited in: Haase *et al.*, *VEB-Nachwuchs*, p. 85; Imke cited in Eckart, *So sehe ick die Sache*, p. 58 and Linda T. cited in Bähr, *Wir denken erst seit Gorbatschow*, p. 24.
79. SAPMO DO4/710, p. 14.
80. ESG Dresden, April–September 1978. In: ESG, pp. 16–19, 68–9, 81.
81. SAPMO DY30 IV2/2.42/69, 'Bundesvorstand DFD, 18.5.1983', pp. 1–9.
82. SAPMO DO4/672, Klohr *et al.*, 'Kirchenstudie 1981', pp. 72–83.
83. Dogerloh, *Evangelische Jugendarbeit*, p. 174.
84. Cited in Helwig, *Jugend und Familie*, p. 58.
85. *c.* 5000–10,000 young people saw themselves as part of the alternative peace movement in the early 1980s. Eberhard Kurth (1984) cited in Schnitzler, *Der Umbruch*, p. 12.
86. ESG, pp. 114–27.
87. SAPMO DY30 vorl. SED 35486, 23.8.1984, 'Kirchliche Kinder- und Jugendarbeit in Magdeburg', p. 10.
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89. SAPMO DO4/1075, Klohr *et al.*, 'Kirchenstudie 1988', pp. 51–3.
90. Survey conducted by J. Lohmann and R. Koch in 1983 among 1000 young people in the northern districts who attended the *Junge Gemeinde*, cited in Barbara Hille, Walter Jaide, *DDR-Jugend-Politisches Bewußtsein und Lebensalltag* (Opladen, 1990), pp. 248–9.
91. SAPMO DO4/959, 19.5.1989, p. 5.
92. SAPMO DO4/1075, Klohr *et al.*, 'Kirchenstudie 1988', p. 53.
93. Günter Krusche, 'Gemeinden in der DDR sind beunruhigt. Wie soll die Kirche sich zu den Gruppen stellen?' (1988) cited in Schnitzler, *Der Umbruch*, p. 14.
94. SAPMO DO4/137, June 1974, Christa Lewek, 'Rolle der Frau', p. 6.
95. Ibid., p. 8.

96. SAPMO DY30 vorl.SED 26771, 24.5.1978 and 19.12.1979, 'Informationsberichte Bundesvorstand'.

97. SAPMO DO4/1123, 10.6.1987, 'Informationsbericht April/Mai 1987', p. 2; DY 30 J IV2/17/20, 16.10.1986, 'Information an Politbüro', p. 3.

98. For detailed information on the FAK's intentions, see BEK, ed., *Frau und Mann in Kirche und Gesellschaft-Arbeitsergebnisse des FAK für die Zusammenarbeit von Mann und Frau in Kirche, Familie und Gesellschaft aus den Jahren 1972–85* (Berlin, 1987).

99. EZA 101/4789, 11.9.1985, 'Ausbildungskonzeption'; EZA 101/4790, 'Protokoll der Sitzung des FAK Mann und Frau, 22.11.1985'; see also EZA 101/4788, '4.Tagung der 4.Synode des BEK, 21.–25.9.1984, Vorlage Nr.8'.

100. Elisabeth Gössmann, *Wörterbuch der feministischen Theologie* (Gütersloh, 1991), pp. 106–7; see also GrauZone A1/247 'Anliegen und Inhalte Feministischer Theologie, Vortrag Januar 1990'.

101. EZA 101/4792, FAK Mann und Frau, 'Protokoll des FAK, 11.12.1987', p. 3; see also Annemarie Schönherr, 'Als Kirchenfrau in der DDR-Stationen auf meinem Weg', Conference 24–25.5.97, pp. 4–5.

102. EZA 101/540, 4.3.1974, letter from a Christian woman describing her experiences. See also EZA 101/702, 14.3.1978, 'Burckhardthaus der DDR', pp. 1–2.

103. BBAW, 'Abteilung Akademiebestände nach 1945', A1048, 'Zwischenbilanz der Erfüllung des Z-Forschungsplanes 1981–83 und Jahresbericht 1983', p. 12. The result of an analysis of lifestyles showed 'beträchtliche sozialstrukturelle Differenzierungen'.

104. See in particular *Anzeichen Zwei* (1972): on the subject of Auschwitz-Rainer Bause 'an die zäune von auschwitz' (p. 11), Siegfried Heinrichs 'Auschwitz 1970' (p. 73), Torsten Seela 'Versuch einer Antwort' (p. 159); on specific artists – Uwe Alex 'Vincent van Gogh – Die Kirche in Auvers' (p. 7), Ingrid Hahnfeld 'Bobrowskis Tod' (p. 68) and Friedrich Stachat 'Georg Trakl' (p. 165).

105. Wirth, 'Christliche Literatur', p. 48.

106. Ibid., p. 48.

107. Ilsemarie Sänger, 'Brief an den Leser', p. 204. In: Sänger, Anzeichen Zwei, pp. 203–7.

108. Ibid., p. 205.

109. Wirth, 'Christliche Literatur', pp. 50–1.

110. Ibid., pp. 44, 47.

111. Wirth, 'Christliche Literatur', p. 56. For a detailed analysis of Christian literature in the GDR: Wirth, 'CDU-Kulturpolitik', pp. 472–509.

5   Tensions

1. Huinink *et al.*, *Kollektiv und Eigensinn*, p. 19; see also Solga, *Klassenlose Gesellschaft.*

2. See also Pollack *et al.*, *Zwischen Verweigerung und Opposition*, introduction.

3. See *Weimarer Beiträge* 7/1979.

4. SAPMO DY30 IV B 2/2.024/66, 19.11.1976, Opinions on Biermann.

5. SAPMO DY30 vorl.SED/21404, 3.12.1976, 'Abteilung Verbandsorgane'; SAdK SV 651, 26.7.1977.

6. Robert Havemann to Biermann, 27.12.1976, cited in Andreas W. Mytze, ed., *Europäische Ideen* (London, 1996), p. 21.
7. See for example Stefan Wolle, *Die heile Welt der Diktatur-Alltag und Herrschaft in der DDR 1971–89* (Bonn, 1998), p. 243.
8. Literaturhaus Berlin, *Zensur der DDR*, p. 125.
9. SAPMO DY30 J IV 2/9.06/10, 15.12.1981, 'Zweiter Tag der Berliner Begegnung', pp. 1–2; BStU MfS-BdL/Dok7444, 7.12.81, 'Absicherung der "Berliner Begenung", 13.–15.12.81', pp. 2–4.
10. 'Kurzprotokoll der Präsidiumssitzung, 12.1.1982'. In: AdK, *Zwischen Diskussion und Disziplin*, p. 388.
11. 'Stenographisches Protokoll der Sektionssitzung Literatur und Sprachpflege, 3.3.1982'. In: AdK, *Zwischen Diskussion und Disziplin*, pp. 389–93.
12. Christa Wolf (1984) cited in Emmerich, *Literaturgeschichte*, p. 53 and Erwin Strittmatter, (13.9.1980) cited in ibid., p. 263.
13. Uwe Kolbe, 'Kern meines Romans'. In: 'Bestandsaufnahme Zwei' (Halle, 1981) cited in Literaturhaus Berlin, *Zensur der DDR*, p. 185. The last verse of the hidden text spelled: 'Powerful old men, the revolution shall tear you to shreds.'
14. See 10th authors' congress 24–26.11.1987, Christoph Hein and Günter de Bruyn speaking on censorship. Emmerich, *Literaturgeschichte*, pp. 61, 268; Atkins *et al.*, *Retrospect und Review*, p. 245; Literaturhaus Berlin, *Zensur der DDR*, p. 32.
15. SAPMO DY30 IV B 2/2.024/77, 6.6.1979, Werner Rackwitz on talks with Siegfried Matthus (28.5.1979) and Peter Hacks (1.6.1979).
16. Ibid., 'Diskussion während der Beiratssitzung des Mitteldeutschen Verlags, 13.4.1972', pp. 1–2.
17. SAPMO DY30 IV B 2/2.024/78, 28.2.1973, 'Stimmungen im Berliner SV', p. 8
18. SAdK ZAA 1569, 'Bericht der AdK über die Verwirklichung der Beschlüsse des IX. Parteitages, 1.6.1977'; SAPMO DY30 J IV 2/9.06/10, 7.6.1979, 'Grußadresse des SV an Honecker'.
19. 'Erklärung des Präsidiums der AdK der DDR, 7.12.1976'. In: AdK, *Zwischen Diskussion und Disziplin*, p. 317.
20. On 14.8.1977, Christa Wolf threatened to resign from the SV's executive committee. See Literaturhaus Berlin, *Zensur der DDR*, p. 127; see also Christa Wolf 'Projektionsraum Romantik. Ein Gespräch' Interview with Frauke Mayer-Gosau (1982) cited in Alexander Stephan, *Christa Wolf* (Munich, 1987), p. 134.
21. Gabriele Eckart (1988) cited in Richard Zisper, *Fragebogen: Zensur-Zur Literatur vor und nach dem Ende der DDR* (Leipzig, 1995), p. 28.
22. Ian Wallace, 'The Politics of Confrontation: The Biermann Affair and its Consequences', p. 72. In: Axel Goodbody, Dennis Tate, eds, *Geist und Macht-Writers and the State in the GDR* (Amsterdam, Atlanta, 1992), pp. 68–80.
23. Leeder, *Breaking Boundaries*, p. 27. Leeder also stresses the many overlaps between these two literary spheres (pp. 9–10), see also for the role and works of Bert Pappenfuss-Gorek (p. 28).
24. Cited from Bernd Wagner, 'Der Griff ins Leere. II Versuche' (1988). In: Leeder, *Breaking Boundaries*, pp. 26–7.
25. SAdK, Sektion Literatur: 1011/2, 20.04.1983, p. 279.
26. Ibid.: 1273/1, 11.04.1988, p. 61.

27. Wollenberger, *Virus der Heuchler*, p. 20.
28. LAB, BPA IVC-2/9.02/573, information from 15.5.1972, 27.5.1975, 10.7.1975, 28.7.1975, 19.12.1975 and 6.12.1976; BPA IVC-2/9.01/540, 2.2.1976; SAPMO DY24/11273, information from 1983 on the Institute of Literature; DY24/14231, p. 98; see also Malte Sieber, Ronald Freytag, *Kinder des Systems-DDR-Studenten vor, in und nach dem Herbst'89* (Berlin, 1993), p. 67.
29. Lindner, *Demokratische Revolution*, pp. 12–14; see also Erhardt Neubert, *Geschichte der Opposition in der DDR 1949–89* Bundeszentrale für politische Bildung (Bonn, 1998), p. 320.
30. See membership of 'lila offensive'. In: Katrin Rohnstock, ed., *Frauen in die Offensive* (Berlin, 1990); although an analysis of the social backgrounds of leading dissidents has still to be written the following examples indicate a strong tendency: Bärbel Bohley – artist, Vera Lengsfeld – studied philosophy, worked as an assistant at the AdW, Bettina Wegner – artist, Klaus Schlesinger – writer, Gerd Poppe – physician, Wolfgang Templin – studied philosophy, worked at the AdW; see also BStU MfS-HAXX/AKG 128, September 1983, 'Vorliegende Erkenntnisse zu feindlich-negativen Aktivitäten einer "alternativen Frauenbewegung"', p. 9.
31. Lindner, *Demokratische Revolution*, pp. 58–9 Numbers quoted from a MfS survey taken in October 1989 in relation to branches of 'Neues Forum' and 'Demokratischer Aufbruch' (Democratic Advance) in Erfurt. The indicated tendency was also reflected in a survey conducted among members of 'Neues Froum' in December 1989. Similar profiles probably also applied to womens' groups and other alternative groups that existed since the early 1980s.
32. Wollenberger, *Virus der Heuchler*, p. 81; Pollack *et al.*, 'Einleitung', p. 12.
33. Besier *et al.*, *Pfarrer, Christen und Katholiken*, p. 298.
34. BStU JHS GVS73/76, pp. 16–17, 19, 38.
35. Goeckel, *The Lutheran Church*, p. 260; Dieter Rink 'Ausreiser, Kirchengruppen, Kulturopposition und Reformer – Zu Differenzen und Gemeinsamkeiten in Opposition und Widerstand in der DDR in den 70er und 80er Jahren', p. 70. In: Pollack *et al.*, *Zwischen Verweigerung und Opposition*, pp. 54–77.
36. Nothnagle, *East German Myth*, p. 78; see also Jeannette Madarász, review of ibid. In: *German History* (London, 2000), pp. 547–8.
37. Fulbrook 'Ossis and Wessis', p. 418; see also Christiane Zehl Romero, '"Vertreibung aus dem Paradies?" GDR women's writing reconsidered', p. 116. In: Atkins *et al.*, *Retrospect und Review*, pp. 108–25; Solga, *Klassenlose Gesellschaft*, pp. 207–13.
38. SAPMO DY30 IV2/2.042/6, pp. 122, 152; DY30 IV2/2.036/1, p. 134; DY31/602, p. 19.
39. Monika Deutz-Schroeder, Jochen Staadt, eds, *Teurer Genosse-Briefe an Erich Honecker* (Berlin, 1994), pp. 76–7.
40. BStU JHS GVS73/76, pp. 39, 46–50.
41. BStU JHS VVS367/79.
42. Ibid., p. 15.
43. BStU MfS-HAIX/10766, although no major incidents occurred at the 'Pfingsttreffen 1989', violence was mostly linked to alcohol and neo-Nazi involvement.
44. SAPMO DY31/1113, p. 8; see also DO4/808, 28.6.1984, 'Rat des Bezirkes Magdeburg, Sektor Kirchenfragen', p. 3.

45. BStU JHS VVS739/79, p. 14.
46. BStU JHS VVS976/83, pp. 12–13; see also MfS-HAXX4181, 15.5.1985, 'Einschätzung der politisch-operativen Lageentwicklung unter jugendlichen Personenkreisen im Jahr 1984', pp. 12–20.
47. See also BStU MfS-HAXX4181, 15.5.1985, 'Einschätzung der politisch-operativen Lageentwicklung unter jugendlichen Personenkreisen im Jahr 1984', pp. 17, 23–4; see also MfS-HAIX285, 15.2.1985, 'Einschätzung der politisch-operativen Lage unter jugendlichen Personenkreisen im Jahre 1984', pp. 2–3; see also MfS-HAIX1585, April 1986, 'Einschätzung der politisch-operativen Lageentwicklung unter jugendlichen Personenkreisen im Jahre 1985/86', pp. 25–38.
48. Goeckel, *The Lutheran Church*, pp. 260–1; see also Hille *et al.*, *DDR-Jugend*, pp. 240–1.
49. BStU MfS HAXX/9 Nr.735, 11.2.1981, 'Verstärkte staatliche Einflussnahme auf die Auswahl des künstlerischen und schriftstellerischen Nachwuchses', pp. 2–3.
50. See Nothnagle, *East German Myth.*
51. SAPMO DY30 IV2/2.036/1, p. 124.
52. Ibid., p. 116.
53. Bishop Axel Noack 'Preface', p. 5. In: Martin Hohmann, *Schwerter zu Pflugscharen – Die Friedensarbeit der evangelischen Kirchen in der DDR 1981/1982 – dargestellt an Beispielen aus der Evangelischen Kirche der Kirchenprovinz Sachsen* (Berlin, 1998), pp. 5–6.
54. Jürgen Israel, 'Interview mit Dr.Gottfried Forck, Bischof der Evangelischen Kirche Berlin-Brandenburg', p. 23. In: Jürgen Israel, *Zur Freiheit berufen – Die Kirche in der DDR als Schutzraum der Opposition* (Berlin, 1991), pp. 23–36.
55. Dogerloh, *Evangelische Jugendarbeit*, p. 277.
56. Ibid., p. 278; see also SAPMO DY30 IV2/2.036/40, pp. 142–3; BStU MfS-HAXX4149, p. 22.
57. Israel, 'Interview mit Dr.Gottfried Forck', p. 23.
58. Pollack, 'Religiosität und Kirchlichkeit', p. 275.
59. Angelika Engelmann, 'Feministische Theologie in der DDR', p. 41. In: Pasternack, *Hochschule & Kirche*, pp. 38–47.
60. SAPMO DO4/710, 14.2.1985, Statements by the BEK 1976–84, p. 11.
61. SAPMO DO4/1015, 17.10.1988, 'Eingabe an Staatssekretär für Kirchenfragen', pp. 1–3.
62. See discussions and initiatives within ESG Dresden, April 1978–September 1978. In: ESG, pp. 95–142.
63. BStU JHS GVS 65/84, pp. 19–20.
64. Wollenberger, *Virus der Heuchler*, pp. 77–8.
65. See Winkler, *Frauenreport'90.*
66. Schenk 'Politik- und Feminismusverständnis', p. 62; see also Ellermann *et al.*, *Bundesdeutsche Hausfrau?*, pp. 121–9.
67. Ilse Nagelschmidt, Irene Dölling and Anita Grandke were outstanding social scientists working on the subject of female integration in society in the GDR
68. Schenk, 'Politik- und Feminismusverständnis', pp. 60–1.
69. SAPMO DY30 vorl.SED/26795/2, 9.12.1977, 'Frauenkommissionen bei den Bezirks-und Kreisvorständen des FDGB'; DY30 IV2/2.042/59, Speigner, p. 9.

70. Schenk, 'Politik- und Feminismusverständnis', p. 63; Diemer, *Patriarchalismus*, pp. 408, 410.
71. Diemer, *Patriarchalismus*, p. 413.
72. SAPMO DY30 vorl.SED/26795/2, 9.12.1977, 'Frauenkommissionen bei den Bezirks-und Kreisvorständen des FDGB', p. 6.
73. SAPMO DY30 vorl.SED/26807, Petitions to the 'Staatsrat' and 'Ministerrat' in the second part of 1977. See also DY30 vorl.SED/36879, 26.5.1983, p. 3 regarding prejudice within the academic sector.
74. Gisela Helwig, 'Einleitung', p. 10. In: Helwig, *Frauen*, pp. 9–21; Barbara Bertram, ' "Nicht zurück an den Kochtopf" – Aus-und Weiterbildung in Ostdeutschland', p. 197. In: Helwig, *Frauen*, pp. 191–214.
75. Behrend, 'Frauenemanzipation', p. 44.
76. SAPMO Library FDJ 6047, Barbara Bertram, 'Leistung und Lebensweise junger Frauen in der DDR', April 1986, pp. 9–11.
77. Bathrick, *The Powers of Speech*, p. 139.
78. Andre Hahn, 'Der Wandel beginnt–Einführende Daten und Fakten', pp. 53–4. In: Ralf Schwarzer, Matthias Jerusalem, *Gesellschaftlicher Umbruch als kritisches Lebensereignis–Psychosoziale Krisenbewältigung von Übersiedlern und Ostdeutschen* (Munich, 1994), pp. 23–104.
79. SAPMO DY30 vorl.SED/16707, 19.3.1974, Lange to Werner Lamberz; DY30 vorl.SED/16707, 31.5.1973, 'Abteilung Frauen' to Politburo; DY30/JIV2/17/8, Report on a course with the heads of the 'Frauenkommissionen' 5.–9.6.1979; DY30 vorl.SED/36881, 25.7.1984; DY30 IV2/2.042/68, educational work Lange did for the FDJ in 1987.
80. SAPMO DY30 vorl.SED/36879, 28.3.1984, speech Honecker in February 1983; SAPMO DY30 IV2/2.042/33, 1.2.1985, speech Honecker.
81. Dölling, 'Zwischen Hoffnung und Hilflosigkeit', p. 100; Dölling, 'Patriarchalismus staatssozialistischer Gesellschaften', pp. 407–17.
82. SAPMO DY30 IV2/2.042/61, Petitions sent to the 'Staatsrat'. Between January and September 1975, nearly 15,000 women complained on various issues, nearly 5000 less than in 1977, as shown in DY30 vorl.SED/26807, 21.11.1977, Report compiled by 'Staatsrat der DDR, Sekretär H.Eichler', p. 1.
83. SAPMO DY30 vorl.SED/26807, 21.11.1977, report compiled by 'Staatsrat der DDR, Sekretär H.Eichler', pp. 1, 3.
84. SAPMO DY30 vorl.SED/16723, pp. 2–5, analyses 20.1.1975 and 15.1.1973.
85. SAPMO DY30 vorl.SED/26789, analyses 1976–80.
86. SAPMO DY30 vorl.SED/16723, pp. 2–5, analyses 20.1.1975 and 15.1.1973; DY30 vorl.SED/26789, analyses 1976–80; for similar trends see DY30 vorl.SED/36866, 12.7.1984, analyses 1982–84.
87. SAPMO DY30 vorl.SED/16723, p. 5; DY30 vorl.SED/26789, The increase in numbers during 1976 was linked to the IX Party Conference.
88. BStU MfS-HAXX/AKG 128, September 1983, 'Vorliegende Erkenntnisse zu feindlich-negativen Aktivitäten einer "alternativen Frauenbewegung" ', p. 9
89. First attempts in this direction have been selective and fail to provide an overview of the sociological of women within the citizens' movement. See: Ingrid Miethe, *Frauen in der DDR-Opposition* (Opladen, 1999).
90. BStU MfS-ZAIG5785, 2.5.1988, 'Information über alternative Frauengruppen', p. 3; see also MfS-HAXX/AKG 128, p. 110, report from 6.9.1985 counting eight groups with 200 members.

91. See Kenawi, *Frauengruppen*, pp. 432–67. Kenawi lists 130 women's groups for the 1980s.

92. Ibid., p. 27.

93. BStU MfS-HAXX/AKG 128, September 1983, 'Vorliegende Erkenntnisse zu feindlich-negativen Aktivitäten einer "alternativen Frauenbewegung" ', pp. 21, 36, 53; see also Sillge, *Un-Sichtbare Frauen.*

94. Kenawi, *Frauengruppen*, p. 30.

95. Dölling, 'Zwischen Hoffnung und Hilflosigkeit', pp. 95–6.

96. See Honecker, *Moabiter Notizen* (1994), Egon Krenz, *Herbst 89* (1999) and Alexander Schalck-Golodkowski, *Deutsch–Deutsche Erinnerungen* (2000).

97. Wolle, *Heile Welt der Diktatur*, p. 52 'langweilig, phantasielos, provinziell, verspiessert, kleinkarriert – ganz wie das Leben in der DDR.'

98. See Christa Wolf and Günter Kunert cited in Bathrick, *The Powers of Speech*, p. 12; see also Nothnagle, *East German Myth*, Chapter 3.

99. SAPMO DY30 IVB2/14/14, 22.3.1983, Bellmann to E. Honecker, p. 3.

100. Ibid., p. 4.

101. Jarausch, 'Fürsorgediktatur', pp. 33–46.

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1. Jarausch, 'Fürsorgediktatur'.

2. SAPMO DO4/778, 20.5.1985, 'Junge Christen in der FDJ', p. 5; DY30 vorl.SED/41890, October 1987, 'Schlussfolgerungen Kirche', p. 1; DY30 IVB2/14/19, 13.1.88, 'Gespräch mit der Kirchenleitung', p. 2; DO4/768, p. 82

3. See Chapter 5 for a detailed discussion of tensions in the GDR.

4. SAPMO DY30 vorl.SED/26807, 21.11.1977, report compiled by 'Staatsrat der DDR, H. Eichler', p. 3; DY30 IV2/2.042/61, 30.11.1988, between January and November 1988 the 'Staatsrat' received 4667 petitions from young people – 71% concerned housing problems.

5. Gaus, 'Nischengesellschaft'.

6. See for example Deutz-Schroeder *et al.*, *Teurer Genosse.*

7. Staadt, *Eingaben*, pp. 1–2.

8. See also BStU JHS VVS367/79, p. 15.

9. SAPMO DY30 vorl.SED/40141, 8.5.1987, 'Beschwerde einer Sowjetbürgerin'

10. Michalzik, *An der Seite der Genossen*, pp. 177–8 Study by Peter Voss (1981), See also ZIJ study on 'Geschichtsbewusstsein' (1987/88) and A17 on XI SED Party Conference (1986).

11. SAPMO DY30 vorl.SED/21404, 5.11.1976, p. 9; DO4/601, 26.2.1982, 'Einfluss der Kirche unter der Jugend im Bezirk Dresden', p. 5; DY30 IV2/2.036/1, p. 119, BStU JHS VVS976/83, 8.3.1983, p. 10.

12. SAPMO DY30 vorl.SED/21420, 24.10.1972, 'Abteilung Jugend' to Walter Friedrich.

13. ACDP 7-10-3350, 'Beschlussvorlage für die Sitzung am 11.3.80'; SAPMO DR2/A.3032, 'Eingaben an das MfV, 1/1987', p. 5.

14. Niemann, *Meinungsforschung*, pp. 48–50.

15. Herta Kuhrig cited by Kossak, *Frauenpolitik*, p. 85; see also Henning *et al.*, *Jugend in der DDR*, p. 13.

16. Arnold *et al.*, 'Außenansichten', pp. 34–8.

17. Niemann, *Meinungsforschung*, p. 55.
18. SAPMO DY31/602, p. 15.
19. Markus Guettler, Das statistische Informationssystem der DDR. Ein Beispiel für die Grenzen computergestützter Entscheidungsunterstützung (TU-Berlin)
20. Gunnar Winkler, *Sozialreport'90* (Berlin, 1990), pp. 71–3.
21. Heiner Müller cited in Frauke Meyer-Gossau, 'Hinhaltender Gehorsam', p. 109. In: Arnold, *Feinderklärung*, pp. 103–15.
22. BStU MfS-HAXX/AKG 128, September 1983, 'Erkenntnisse zu feindlich – negativen Aktivitäten einer "alternativen Frauenbewegung" ', pp. 8–10; see also Sillge, *Un-Sichtbare Frauen*, p. 86. Homosexual groups also tried to use the administrative possibilities to find acceptance.
23. SAPMO DO4/807, 16.10.1986, 'Überregionale kirchliche Jugendveranstaltungen, 1/1986', p. 2.
24. Sillge, *Un-Sichtbare Frauen*, p. 86.
25. Staadt, *Eingaben*, p. 2.
26. Elsner, 'Flankierende Stabilisierungsmechanismen', p. 76.
27. Oliver Werner, 'Politisch überzeugend, feinfühlig und vertrauensvoll? – Eingabenbearbeitung in der SED', p. 463. In: Timmermann, *Diktaturen in Europa*, pp. 461–79.
28. Ibid., p. 479.
29. Compare for example SAPMO DY30 vorl.SED/16723, petitions 'Abteilung Frauen', 1972–74 with DY30 vorl.SED/36866, petitions 'Abteilung Frauen', 1982–84. See also DR2/A.3032 and DR2/A.3033.
30. Elsner, 'Flankierende Stabilisierungsmechanismen', pp. 77, 84.
31. SAPMO DY30 vorl.SED/26807, Petitions to the 'Staatsrat' between 1974–79, none of which record political criticism. See also petitions addressed to the DFD, e.g. DY30 vorl.SED/16733/1; DY31/603 the 'Abteilung Frauen', e.g. DY30 vorl.SED/16723; DY30 vorl.SED/26789; DY30 vorl.SED/36866 for similar non-political petitions in the 1970s and 1980s.
32. SAPMO DY30 vorl.SED/26807, 21.11.1977, Report from 'Staatsrat der DDR, H.Eichler', p. 2.
33. SAPMO DR2/A.7170, p. 13, A great percentage of those petitions concerned access to higher education. They resulted in a high number of students ('eine größere Anzahl') being admitted.
34. SAPMO DR2/A.3032, 'Analyse der Eingaben für 1.7.1987–31.12.1987'; see also DR2/A.7170, 'Analyse der Eingaben 2/1975', p. 5.
35. SAPMO DO4/1396, 6.9.1988, 'Vermerk für den Genossen Staatssekretär', p. 1.
36. Ibid., p. 1.
37. SAPMO DO4/1015, 11.7.1989, Prof. Nenner to Kurt Löffler, see also Löffler's refusal from 13.4.1989 to reply to a letter sent by 'Kirchliche Erziehungskammer der Evangelischen Kirche in Berlin-Brandenburg' in April 1989.
38. BStU MfS-HAXX4152, HAXX/8, p. 169.
39. SAPMO DY24/14198, 8.6.1983, Krenz to E. Honecker; DY31/602, p. 14.
40. Staadt, *Eingaben,* pp. 58–63.
41. SAPMO DY31/602, pp. 18–24.
42. Ibid., p. 14.
43. Ibid., p. 15.

44. SAPMO DO4/1478, 10.2.1988. Conversation Gysi and Hempel, p. 2.

45. See for examples from the year 1983 – SAPMO DO4/601, 'Staatssekretär für Kirchenfragen', petitions from young Christians regarding the 'Pfingst' demonstrations; DY30 IV2/2.036/40, Paul Verner's office, petitions from Christian communities and parish priests regarding the stationing of cruise missiles; DO4/1394, 'Staatssekretär für Kirchenfragen', theology students wrote petitions to various institutions regarding their refusal to participate in the obligatory military training. For further examples see petitions sent to the 'Staatssekretär für Kirchenfragen' regarding military education in schools between 1978 and 1979, e.g. DO4/577, petitions MfV, e.g. on the education system DO4/1015, 11.7.1989; to the 'Staatsrat' regarding an alternative to the military service, e.g. DY30 IV2/2.042/61, 30.11.1988, p. 3.

46. SAPMO DR2/A.6699, 25.9.1978, p. 1.

47. BStU JHS VVS827/80, p. 10; Dogerloh, *Evangelische Jugendarbeit*, pp. 211–13.

48. See for example the 'Frauenfriedenskreis' in Dresden that worked almost entirely through petitions, SAPMO DO4/1123, 23.1.1989, petition analysis for 1988, p. 3.

49. SAPMO DO4/712, 25.5.1987, 'Gespräch des Staatssekretärs mit KKL, 21.5.1987', p. 4.

50. ACDP 7-10-3350, 'Beschlussvorlage, 11.3.1980', p. 2.

51. ACDP 7-13-3259, 9.3.1988, Episcopus Berolinensis.

52. See for example: SAPMO DY30 vorl.SED/26807, various analyses of petitions to the 'Staatsrat' between 1974–79; DY30 IV2/2.042/61, 'Staatsrat' on Women – 1974/75; DY30 IV2/2.042/63, 'Staatsrat' – 1987; DY30 IV2/2.042/61, 'Staatsrat' on Youth – 1988; DY30 vorl.SED/16733/1, DFD – 1972–73; DY31/603, DFD – 1984–89; DY31/602, DFD – 1986–89; DY31/601, DFD – 1987–89; DY30 vorl.SED/16723, 'Abteilung Frauen' – 1972–74; DY30 vorl.SED/26789, 'Abteilung Frauen' – 1974–79; DY30 vorl.SED/36866, 'Abteilung Frauen' – 1982–84; DR2/A.7170, MfV – 1973–75; DR2/A.3032, MfV – 1987; DR2/A.3033, MfV – 1988.

53. SAPMO DR2/A.3034, MfV – 1989, BStU MfS-HAXX4152, 29.8.1989.

54. The archive of the BStU contains *c*. 180 km of files, 39 million filing cards, 15,600 sacks of destroyed documents.

55. BStU MfS-HAXX4181, 15.5.1985, 'Probleme der politisch–operativen Lageentwicklung unter jugendlichen Personenkreisen im Jahr 1984', p. 21.

56. BStU JHS VVS367/79, p. 21.

57. BStU MfS-HAIX1955, 25.9.1974, p. 1, MfS-HAIX338, 1977, youth crime rates were blamed on PID. See also JHS VVS1039/84, p. 9, PID depicted as reason for young people's interest in Western music.

58. See for example BStU MfS-HAXX/4 1054. Detailed reports regarding occurrences, conversations, and events during the meeting of representatives of work circles 'Peace' within the ESGs on 12.1.1985 in Naumburg.

59. Cited in Besier *et al.*, *Pfarrer, Christen und Katholiken*, p. 1.

60. Numbers cited in Clemens Vollnhals, 'Das Ministerium für Staatssicherheit'. In: Kaelble *et al.*, *Sozialgeschichte*, pp. 509–10.

61. Cited in Joachim Walther, Gesine von Prittwitz, 'Mielke und die Musen-Die Organisation der Überwachung'. In: Arnold, ed., *Feinderklärung*, p. 78.

62. Besier *et al.*, *Pfarrer, Christen und Katholiken*, introduction.

63. Böthig *et al.*, *Machtspiele*, p. 12.
64. See for example BStU MfS-HAXX/AKG 128, p. 60–106; MfS-ZAIG5785, 2.5.1988, 'Information über alternative Frauengruppen'.
65. Renate Ellmenreich, *Frauen bei der Stasi-Am Beispiel der MfS-Bezirksverwaltung Gera* (Erfurt, 1999), p. 47.
66. Bettina Wegner cited in 'Frauen im Visier der Stasi'. In: *Freitag*, 25.11.1994; see also 'Ich wollte Guillaume sein', *taz*, 17.11.1994, Quotation from a MfS file: 'Although she studied philosophy, she is unable to interpret Marxism–Leninism properly, which is probably connected with the fact that she still has not found a partner.'
67. Cited in Wallace, 'Politics of Confrontation', p. 68.
68. BStU MfS-HAIX649, pp. 1–12, 15.5.1966, 'Befehl Nummer 11/66', and pp. 13–40, 15.5.1966, 'Befehl Nummer 4/66'. Both of these orders were confirmed repeatedly until 1989.
69. BStU MfS-HAIX649, pp. 8ff; MfS-BdL/Dok2468, 18.6.1969, 'Dienstanweisung 3/69'; MfS-HAIX9232, pp. 163ff, 29.4.1977. See also JHS VVS234/75, p. 19.
70. BStU JHS VVS234/75, p. 14; JHS VVS279/80, pp. 106–7; MfS-HAIX444, November 1983; JHS VVS803/85, pp. 15–17.
71. BStU MfS-HAIX9232, p. 164; MfS-HAIX896, pp. 827ff.
72. BStU MfS-BdL3308, 7.12.1987, 'Arbeitspläne der nichtstrukturellen Arbeitsgruppe Jugend der BV Cottbus für 1988'.
73. See for example BStU JHS21543, pp. 43–4.
74. See for example Udo Scheer, *Vision und Wirklichkeit – Die Opposition in Jena in den 70er und 80er Jahren* (Berlin, 1999); Haase *et al.*, *VEB-Nachwuchs*, pp. 50–4
75. BStU MfS-ZAIG5785, 2.5.1988.
76. BStU JHS21347, pp. 60–1, 72.
77. BStU MfS-HAIX649, 15.5.1966, orders 11/66 and 4/66; JHS VVS279/80, p. 52; see also p. 74.
78. Wollenberger, *Virus der Heuchler*, p. 21.
79. Ibid., p. 32.
80. BStU JHS VVS234/75, p. 39.
81. See for example Honecker, *Moabiter Notizen.*
82. See Walter Süß, *Staatssicherheit am Ende – Warum es den Mächtigen nicht gelang, 1989 eine Revolution zu verhindern* (Berlin, 1999), pp. 133, 140.
83. Kukutz *et al.*, *Geschützte Quelle*. See also GrauZone A/66, 'Frauen im Visier der Stasi'. In: *Freitag*, 25.11.1994.
84. Neubert, *Stolpe – Untersuchungsausschuß*, See also Reinhard Hildebrandt, 'Die Evangelische Kirche im DDR-Sozialismus', pp. 703–5. In: *Die Neue Gesellschaft – Frankfurter Hefte*, 40/8 (Bonn, 1993), pp. 694–705, for a very positive representation of Stolpe's activities. Regarding Kant, see discussion in the German media in the early 1990s, for example H. Kant and Rayk Wieland. In: *Konkret* 1/96, p. 51.
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16. Emmerich, *Literaturgeschichte*, pp. 256–8, 261.
17. Besier *et al.*, *Pfarrer, Christen und Katholiken*, p. 82.
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24. Maren Becker, Manuela Mann, *Deutsch-deutsche Migration: zwischen 'Republikflucht', Übersiedlung, Freikauf und erzwungene Ausreise und ökonomisch*

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34. SAPMO DO4/1478, 10.4.1985, 'Gespräch mit Böttcher, 15.3.1985', p. 2.
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8 Conclusion – Stability and the Image of Doom

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Appendix

Table 1   Support for the GDR. Most positive reaction (unlimited support)
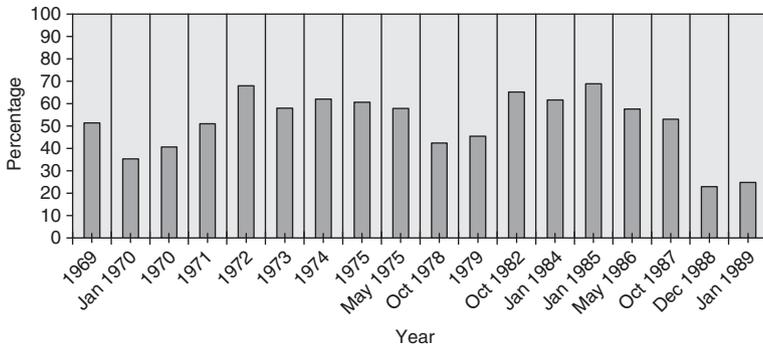
Compiled from selected ZIJ surveys and analyses (U69, U70 F75/23, U75, U79, S13, S58, S51, S42, A17, A53, U88, A87).

Table 2   Support for the GDR. Positive reaction (unlimited and limited support)
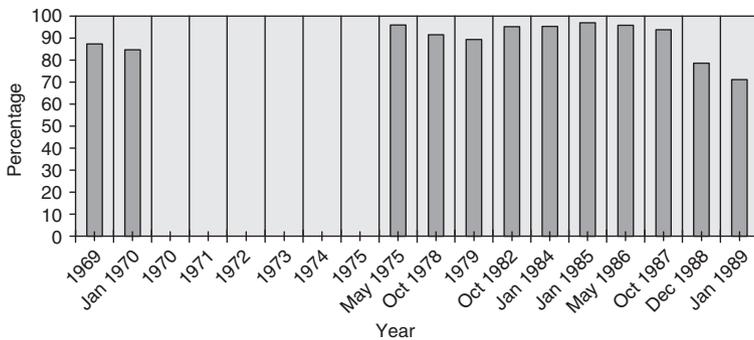
Compiled from selected ZIJ surveys and analyses (U69, U70 F75/23, U75, U79, S13, S58, S51, S42, A17, A53, U88, A87).

Table 3   Belief in Marxism–Leninism. Most positive reaction (unlimited support)
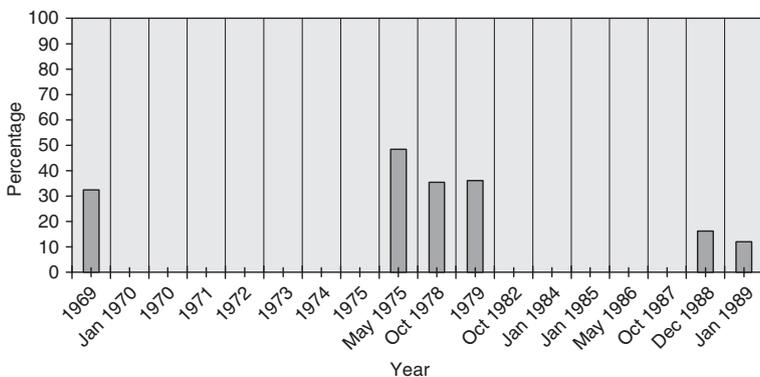
Compiled from selected ZIJ surveys and analyses (U69, U70 F75/23, S13, U88, A87).

Table 4   Belief in Marxism–Leninism. Positive reaction (unlimited and limited support)
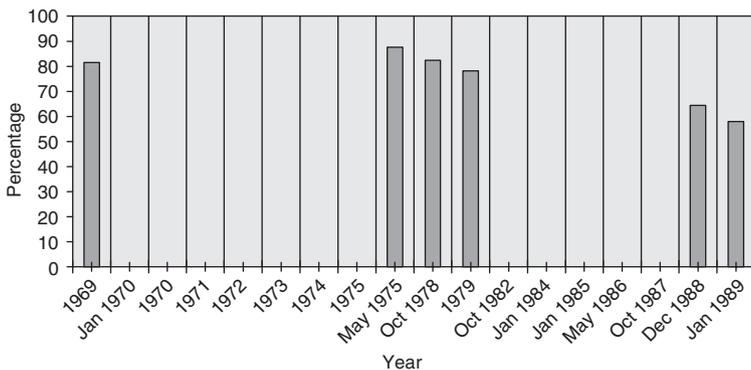
Compiled from selected ZIJ surveys and analyses (U69, U70 F75/23, S13, U88, A87).

Table 5 Belief in the spread of socialism world wide. Most positive reaction (unlimited support)
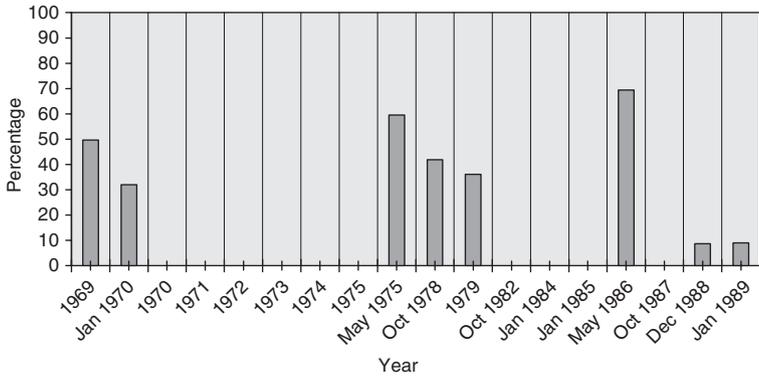
Compiled from selected ZIJ surveys and analyses (U69, U70, U75, U79, A17, U88, A87).

Table 6 Belief in the spread of socialism world wide. Positive reaction (unlimited and limited support)
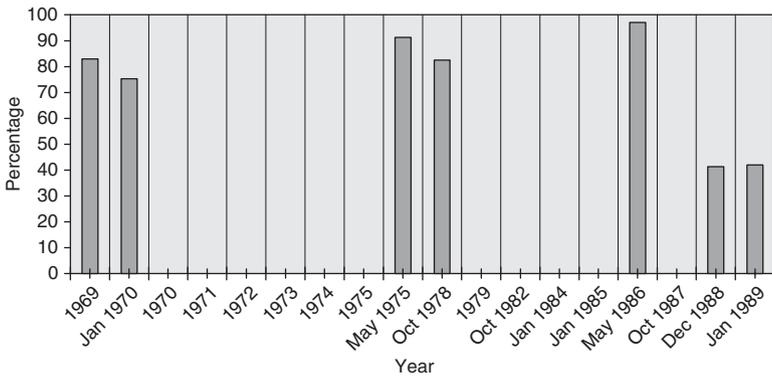
Compiled from selected ZIJ surveys and analyses (U69, U70, U75, U79, A17, U88, A87).

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For this book, the following archives have been consulted to access data that focuses on specific aspects of GDR society, concentrating on the four social groups at the centre of discussion. The regime's point of view has been provided primarily by material from both the SAPMO and the files of the MfS. Additionally, files from the BLA, the East German CDU, and the AdK yielded insights into specific sections of society and their relationships to central political institutions. Sources such as the AdW, the APW, and the ZIJ were specifically useful in assessing developments amongst the population based on various surveys and analyses prepared by their researchers. These sources were supplemented by the EZA, with special attention to the position of Christian women, and by the Grauzone archive's material on the alternative women's movement in the GDR. In addition, literature by selected GDR authors and interviews with former GDR citizens of diverse social and political backgrounds have been used to draw out the varying shades of life in a socialist dictatorship. These different sources complement each other to highlight communication, compromise, and co-existence in particular social, cultural, and political circumstances.

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