

Interpersonal relationships are important regardless of the political regime in which one is living. However, in a society where so much is forbidden, songs about love take on political significance. The German Democratic Republic (GDR) assumed, among other things, the cultural politics of the Soviet Union of which it was a satellite. As in the Soviet Union, repression became a common method of dealing with socio-political problems in the GDR. A strategy of lies perpetuated by a conspiratorial committee of so-called Party socialists, including the intrusive mechanisms of the State Security Service [Staatssicherheit], made the difference between the theory and the practice of socialism implausible.¹ Because of this, people had to be certain that they could trust those to whom they gave their love. If they reached the point where this was indeed possible, the relationship was valued highly, because within that relationship individuals could be honest in their discussion of issues affecting both their private and their public lives.

The love songs discussed here include sexual relationships, but they also embrace the love of good friends. That these relationships are with individuals, and not within groups, has been discussed in the work of Hans Joachim Maaz. In *Der Gefühlsstau* [Pent-Up Emotions], this GDR psychoanalyst documented the repressions practised in the GDR after the fall of the Iron Curtain:

Auch die oft gepriesenen privaten Gruppierungen und Freundeskreise verharrten in der Regel in Pseudobeziehungen. Meist war der verbindende Nenner ein gemeinsamer Außenfeind (das System), es dominierte die orale Versorgung (Alkohol, Nikotin, Essen) und das Reden über jemanden oder über etwas, statt von sich zu sprechen.²

[Even the private groups and circles of friends which were held in high regard by most, usually remained pseudo relationships. In general that which united them was a common external enemy (the system), the satisfaction of oral needs was predominant (alcohol, nicotine, food), as well as gossiping about people or things, anything except talking about themselves.]

Public demonstrations illustrate the control exercised over the people, who were required to respond with enthusiasm, clapping and cheering to official

statements in order to confirm their loyalty to the state and thus to socialism/communism. This, combined with the intricate network of spies on orders from the State Security police, made relationships between individuals and within small groups of paramount importance. Often, however, individuals sought to find expression for their psychological needs in only physical satisfaction, using, as Maaz states, either alcohol, nicotine and food, or sex. This occurred as a reaction to the official, yet not documented policy, that negative feelings were to be avoided and happiness controlled. Maaz writes:

Gegenüber dem spontanen Ausdruck wurde Beherrschung und Zurückhaltung verlangt, und wenn das gelungen war, wurde Fröhlichkeit angeordnet. ... Die wirklichen Themen des Lebens (Liebe, Sexualität, Ängste, Nöte, Sinnfragen, Bewältigung von Konflikten) wurden nie berührt. Foren und Gruppen mit ehrlichen und offenen, internalen und emotionalen Mitteilungen waren völlig unbekannt.³

[As far as spontaneity was concerned, discipline and reserve were expected, and if those qualities were in evidence, cheerfulness was prescribed. ... The central issues of life (love, sexuality, fears, needs, questions about the meaning of life and coping with conflict) were never touched on. Forums and groups wanting to communicate openly and honestly about internal, emotional matters were completely unknown.]

Songs expressing any emotion other than adherence to government goals were in themselves considered critical of the government's treatment of the people, and as such were subversive. These songs point out the necessity for negative emotion, enabling individuals to face the reality of their lives.

The love songs written and sung by Wolf Biermann before his expatriation in 1976 reflect his insistence that it is his right to express his ideas and opinions. The GDR objected to his vulgar language and to any criticism of the regime. They were trying to present an image to the world of a country where the highest moral standards were being pursued and where socialism was to become a reality. In his inimitable fashion, Biermann refused to conform to the state's aspirations because of the many inconsistencies he perceived in the government's implementation of justice and human rights.

Frühling auf dem Mont Klamott [*Spring on Mount Klamott*],⁴ written in 1966, illustrates how Biermann combines a description of his love relationship with open criticism of the GDR regime. Mont Klamott is a hill in Berlin which is made up of the rubble left behind by the destruction of the city in World War II. The first stanza contains a mixture of romantic and vulgar language, in which Biermann refers to apartment buildings as *Mietskasernen* [tenement houses], the German word indicating a barrack type construction. He contrasts the image of the chimneys spewing 'den fetten gelben Rauch' [greasy, yellow smoke] with: 'und aus den Hinterhöfen / stieg ein zarter Frühlingshauch' [And from the courtyards rose a delicate breath of spring]. There is irony in Biermann's musical interpretation of these lines however. He sings them in a rough style and with obvious disdain in his voice, as if to indicate that it is hardly likely that a delicate breath of spring could emanate from the backyards of these tenement buildings. This is underlined in the exaggerated way he sings 'Frühlingshauch': he draws out the last syllable by starting the note twice, each time with a crescendo, and then dropping a minor third.

The musical accompaniment to the stanzas stands in contrast to that of the refrain. The stanzas are in a minor key and are sung reflectively, which gives the text a melancholy air, whereas the music for the refrain begins in a major key, is sung jauntily and changes from the 3/4 pulse of the stanza to 4/4 time. The melancholy of the stanza becomes defiantly confident in the refrain, which in the last line returns to a minor key. The liveliness and jauntiness of the music in the refrain underlines Biermann's defiance of authority. Access to Mont Klamott was restricted, and yet Biermann makes no attempt to hide his disregard for this restriction as he describes his excursion onto Mont Klamott. In so doing, Biermann emphasises his position of opposition:

Da ging ich mit der Dicken
die ersten Kätzchen pflücken
trotz Magistratsverbot
zum Mont-Klamott

[Then I went with my fat lover / to pick the
first catkins / in spite of the magistrate's ban
/ to Mont Klamott]

The second and third stanzas focus on the enjoyment Biermann and his lover find in each other's company and their lack of concern that they could be seen by others as they climbed Mont Klamott, in open defiance of the authorities. However, in the fourth stanza Biermann's defiance changes into something akin to frustration at the restrictions which he feels so

keenly. He seeks comfort from his lover, from the warmth of her body. He sings:

Und als wir oben standen
Die Stadt lag fern und tief
Da hatten wir vom Halse
Den ganzen deutschen Mief
Ich legte meine Hände
Auf ihren warmen Bauch
Und sagte: süße Dicke
fühlst du den Frühling auch?

[And when we were standing at the top / the
city seemed far away and a long way down
/ we had rid ourselves / of the whole stink-
ing mess of Germany / I put my hands / on
her warm belly / and said: Sweet fat one /
can you feel the spring, too?]

As Biermann sings 'Ich legte meine Hände / Auf ihren warmen Bauch' [I put my hands / on her warm belly] his voice softens slightly only to return to the cynical tone of the previous lines. Alongside the frustration runs the hope that the political situation can be improved, symbolised by the presence of doves and sparrows on Mont Klamott and by the first flower buds which are breaking through the rubble and scrap heap. It is as if Biermann sees his own defiance reflected in the defiance of nature which appears to survive and bring beauty to the world even up there, 'on the rubbish dump of the last big war'.

It is in the final stanza and refrain that the symbols of communism and its counterpart, capitalism, appear to define most clearly Biermann's position. Recognising that they are sitting on the remains of the war, his lover speaks of peace and Biermann compares the setting sun with the non-existence of communism in the West, only to give thanks for the ideology and commitment to communism in the East in the refrain. He sings:

Wir saßen auf dem Kehricht
Vom letzten großen Krieg
Die Dicke sprach vom Frieden
Ich hörte zu und schwieg
Wir saßen, bis die Sonne
Im Häusermeer absoff
Sahn zu, wie da der Westen
Die rote Farbe soff

Auf Kirchen und auf Schloten
Die selben roten Pfoten
Wir dankten Marx und Gott
am Mont Klamott

[We sat on the rubbish dump / of the last
great war / the fat one spoke about peace /
I listened and was silent / We sat until the
sun / drowned in the sea of houses / watched
as the West / soaked up the red colour.

On churches and on chimneys / the same red
scribble / We thanked Marx and God / on
Mount Klamott]

The last two lines of the song are repeated, almost *adagio*, and the listener waits to find out if Biermann will resolve the song musically in the major or minor key; he draws out the last syllable of 'Klamott', and finally, in one chord, Biermann resolves the song in a major key, emphasising the confidence he feels in the ultimate success of socialism.

Biermann's song stands out as a song of the sixties, during which time critical artists tried to raise the people's awareness of the fallacy of the government's insistence that socialism had become a reality in the GDR. To do this he creates a stark contrast between the beauty of nature and the ugliness of the post-war GDR, thereby making himself politically vulnerable. Biermann belonged to the groups of individuals in the GDR whom Maaz calls 'Die Utopisten' [The Utopians]:

Es waren immer mutige Individualisten
gewesen, die Kraft und Geschick besaßen,
gegen den Strom zu schwimmen oder das
Fähnchen der Gerechten über den stickigen
und muffigen Winden der Opportunisten
keck wehen zu lassen. Deutlich abgesetzt
von den verordneten Phrasen und
Lippenbekenntnissen haben sie wesentliche
Werte wie Frieden, soziale Gerechtigkeit und
menschliche Würde authentisch und damit
glaubhaft darstellen und vermitteln können,
und sie haben damit die Verlogenheit des
Systems entlarvt.⁵

[There had always been courageous individualists who possessed the strength and skill to go against the tide or to fly the flag of the just boldly above the oppressive and musty winds of the opportunists. Clearly separated from the prescribed phrases and lip-service, they were able to portray and convey authentically and therefore plausibly essential values like peace, social justice and human dignity. By doing this they uncovered the deception of the system.]

Written in 1969, Bettina Wegner's song *Nimm deinen Segen nicht von mir* [Don't take your good will away from me]⁶ is much more careful in expression than Biermann's, although some of the references to her own situation as a singer/songwriter are nevertheless obvious ones. It seems at first glance to represent a plea by Wegner to her lover/friend not to leave her, to keep loving her when all others have deserted her. Composed in a minor key and using a simple four-line stanza form, the song poignantly expresses the need of the song's subject for the specific companionship of the

person being addressed. The simple rhyming pattern underlines this person's very basic need to be loved and accepted as an individual:

Und wenn du in der Tür schon stehst
dann komm noch einmal wieder
und hör mich an, bevor du gehst
und höre meine Lieder.

[And when you're standing in the doorway
/ come back again, once more / and listen to
me, before you go / and listen to my songs.]

It is especially the last line of this stanza which leads one to the assumption that Wegner is talking not only about personal relationships but also about her relationship with the state which will not accept the criticisms expressed in her songs despite her obvious allegiance to the pursuit of socialism. In the third stanza Wegner describes unequivocally her vulnerability in the situation in which she finds herself:

Leg deine Hand auf mein Gesicht
so, daß mich keiner sieht
dann, Liebster, fürchte ich mich nicht
vor allem, was uns blüht.

[Put your hand on my face / in such a way
that no one can see me / then, my dearest, I
won't be afraid / of all the things in store for
us.]

This love song is representative of the coded language used by many writers in the late sixties and early seventies as it describes metaphorically the despair and sadness Wegner experiences and which, nine years later, she described openly in another of her songs, *Für meine weggegangenen Freunde*.⁷ The earlier song is a quiet plea for understanding, underlined by repeating the first stanza as the final stanza:

Nimm deinen Segen nicht von mir
laß deine Hände liegen
und deine Liebe und bleib hier
wenn alle Vögel fliegen.

[Don't take your good will away from me /
let your hands lie there / and your love, and
stay here / when all the birds have flown
away.]

The last line of this stanza can also be interpreted as a metaphor of the many artists—writers, singers/songwriters—who found it impossible to live under the repressive state methods. Many left the GDR, either voluntarily or under pressure from the State to leave.

The melody of this song is monotonous, moving within a minor third range for most of the song. The monotony of the melody does not, however, seem to detract from the impact of the text. In fact, it could be said to emphasise it by not attracting attention to itself.

In bar fourteen the melody jumps a sixth which seems to give emphasis to the final line of each stanza.

Wegner describes another aspect of love relationships in her song *Immer wieder eine Lanze werfen* [Always throwing spears]⁸ which suggests that negative feelings need to be expressed. In this song, Wegner remains within a range of four tones except for a single descent to the dominant at the end of the second line of the second stanza. The monotonous guitar accompaniment is set to a comparatively dramatic text, especially in the first two stanzas. The song describes the end of a relationship, and the use of a regular rhyming pattern (abab) in no way detracts from the intensity of the situation. Wegner sings of wounding herself in an attempt to hurt her departing partner, of being caught in the traps that she herself has set for him. The violence and intensity of her emotion is emphasised by the use of dramatic expressions: 'eine Lanze werfen' [throwing a spear], '... verblute ich' [I bleed to death] and 'ich wollte mir mein Schwert noch schärfen' [I still wanted to sharpen my sword], all of which express violence. In context these expressions gain significance and intensity:

Immer wieder eine Lanze werfen
wenn sie trifft, verblute ich.
Ach, ich wollte mir mein Schwert noch
schärfen
doch am Ende treff ich mich.
Jede Schlinge, die ich lege
dich an mich zu binden
ist zum Schluß mir selbst im Wege
will sich um mich winden.

[Keep on throwing spears / if they hit, I will
bleed to death. / Alas, I intended to sharpen
my sword again / yet in the end it hits me. /
Every trap I set / to bind you to me / is in the
end in my own way / wants to wind itself
around me.]

Wegner alludes to her attempts to convince her friends and colleagues to stay in the GDR and to the wounds that their departures cause. The intensely emotional nature of the first two stanzas changes to resignation in the third stanza, the first bar of which differs from the first bar of the other stanzas, emphasising the song's change in mood. Whereas in stanzas one and two Wegner describes her physical reaction to emotion, in the third stanza her reaction to her lover's departure becomes a verbal one: 'Jedes kalte Wort zum Abschied / das ich schleudern will' [Every cold word on parting that I want to sling], at the end of which she reaches a decision: 'darum bin ich lieber still' [That's why I prefer to say nothing]. The resignation described in stanza three becomes reality in the fourth stanza:

Laß dich gehen aus meinem Leben
laß dich nun in Ruh
und will ich dir einen Abschied geben
hör mir nicht mehr zu.

[I will let you go out of my life / I will leave
you in peace / and as a parting gift / do not
listen to me any more.]

Many people looked for alternative forms of fulfillment. They felt strongly the need to escape from day-to-day repressions in their relationships. This is emphasised in Michael Sallmann's song *Wiesenlied*,⁹ written before he was pressured by the GDR government to leave the country in 1977. It is obvious that in both these songs political constraints invaded the private sphere and therefore, in the GDR, cannot be dismissed from any aspect of life. In his song *Wiesenlied* [*Song of the Meadow*],¹⁰ often referred to by Sallmann as *Wiesenfrühstück* [*Breakfast on the Meadow*], he sings about two lovers going for a picnic. The rhyme pattern he uses is regular—aabccb,—which creates an atmosphere relatively free of political constraints as the lovers seek the freedom of the outdoors. The music which accompanies the verses and is monotonous in character does nothing to detract from this feeling, providing no contrast to the text. The 2/4 time also creates an impression of regularity and normality. The lovers first travel by bus and then walk 'durch tiefe Pfützen' [through deep puddles] and 'im kalten Schlamm' [in the cold mud]. These images are the first indication that the lovers' feeling of well-being is a tenuous one. The picture Sallmann creates initially reminds the listener of excursions in early spring. This image dissipates at the onset of the refrain, which evokes other, more negative elements—'Stunden ohne Angst' [hours without fear], 'fast' [almost]—interspersed with the still positive elements of the first stanza:

Tag mit erster warmer Sonne
Stunden ohne Angst und Hast
War'n wir glücklich und zufrieden
fast

[Day with the first, warm sun / hours with-
out fear and haste / we were happy and
contented / almost]

What appears to be merely an escape from everyday existence is also an escape from situations provoking fear. Under these circumstances expressions which appear to describe natural phenomena take on a different meaning: enormous effort is required in order to withdraw from potentially fearful circumstances expressed by the writer in terms of wading through deep puddles and cold mud. The refrain introduces not only a new depth of meaning to the song, but is a contrast to

the six lines of each stanza with its mere three lines and the addition of 'fast' [almost].

In the third stanza, the outside world intrudes more blatantly on the intimacy which Sallmann seeks to create, as the lovers react to smoke coming from the suburbs:

Unsre Waden wurden braun
Später ließen wir sie taun
In unsrer Flamme
Mein Kopf lag auf deinem Bauch
Doch wir husteten vom Rauch
Der Vorstadtessen
Den es auf die Wiesen trieb
Da sprachst du: Komm, hab mich lieb
Ich könnt dich fressen.

[Our calves turned brown / later we thawed them out / in our flame. / My head lay on your belly / yet we coughed from the smoke / coming from suburbia's meals / smoke driven onto the meadows. / Then you said: Come, love me. / I could gobble you up.]

An initial adherence to traditional norms and modes of behaviour erupts in the fourth stanza into vulgar and cheeky conduct:

Auf der Wiese voller Dreck
Aßen wir dann Brot mit Speck
Ganz brav und bieder
Und mit Rülpsen sang ich laut
Auf der Decke dir, der Braut
Paar freche Lieder.

[On the meadow full of mud / we then ate bread and bacon / good and honest / I sang loudly, burping all the while, on the blanket to you, the bride / a few cheeky songs.]

In the final stanza Sallmann describes his unwillingness to leave the idyll they have found and in part created, even to take his lover to work. Within the GDR framework this is a criticism, for the workers were educated to enthusiasm for all activities which were executed for the common good, and this of course included work.

The song's melodic structure seems to be circumlocutory, without being adventurous. While the key signature indicates that the song is in G major, and the melody continually returns to the tonic, the first arpeggio of the song is D major, the dominant of G. The melody descends in bar 6, using the C natural, to resolve on the tonic of G in bar 7. In the refrain, except for the B minor chord in the first bar, the melody revolves around the G major chord, its subdominant C and the relative minor of C, A minor. It returns to G via a modulation to F major. The movement around the G major coincides with the deceptively peaceful picture which Sallmann initially creates, only to admit to the intrusion of fear in their lives.

In the light of the emotional repression¹¹ which formed an integral part of GDR existence, Gerhard Schöne's song *Alles Liebe* [*Everything is Love*],¹² written in 1987, is testimony to the fact that the repression did not stop people forming loving relationships, or indeed stop them from simply being infatuated. Schöne sings a celebration of love relationships to a light, easily flowing accompaniment. The stanzas are accompanied by music in a minor key, using melodic repetition and descending melodic sequences. The first stanza, for example, begins with the love of teenagers for their pop star idols, followed by a description of the way a woman referred to as 'Tante' [Aunty] expresses her love for her pet bird. Schöne contrasts the single-minded love experienced by two who, although temporarily parted, nevertheless feel a oneness, with the relationship of his neighbours which is far from positive: 'Er brüllt herum, und sie sitzt heulend auf dem Bett' [He shouts out loud, she sits on the bed, bawling]. Despite their differences of opinion, they still exhibit concern for each other: 'Und kommt er mal zu spät nach Haus, schaut sie am Fenster nach ihm aus' [And whenever he comes home late, she is watching for him at the window]. They show their love for each other in both negative and positive ways. Schöne sings of the love of two men for each other, exhibited in an affectionate scene he observes when the men enjoy a romantic breakfast, and contrasts this with the bawdy lustiness of soldiers who ogle girls, brag about their conquests and express their lust very openly. He sings:

Ich sah einmal zwei Männer, die
zusammenleben
in einer Badewanne früh bei Kerzenschein
ein Frühstück mit Kaffee und Sekt, mit
Trauben, Küssen und Konfekt.

[Once I saw two men who live together / in a bathtub, early in the morning by candlelight / a breakfast with coffee and champagne, with grapes, kisses and confectionery.]

The importance of Schöne's song lies in its validation of these relationships openly, not judging any one of them, not even the homosexuals whose relationships found little acceptance in official GDR society.

After each stanza, Schöne sings the refrain, which is simply a row of clichés about love, some of which come from well-known love songs, such as Bin von *Kopfbis*... [*I am head over...*], made famous by Marlene Dietrich in the film *Der Blaue Engel* [*The Blue Angel*]. This contrasts with the specific loving relationships of the stanzas:

Das ist alles Liebe,
schenk' mir noch ein kleines bißchen,
parlez-moi d'amour.

Bin von Kopf bis
All you need is love, my baby.
Meistens dreht es sich
ein Leben lang um dich.

[It is all love / just give me a little bit more /
speak to me of love. / I am head over / All
you need is love my baby. / Mostly it re-
volves / a lifetime around you.]

1987 had not yet brought the confidence in a changing society exhibited in songs written in 1988. The lack of commitment in Schöne's performance of this song, exhibited by the minimal voice differentiation he uses, and the contrast between the stanzas and the refrain protected him from a censorship which most certainly would have criticised his placing any importance or giving any credence to expressions of love and their necessity for a healthy existence. As already stated, the song is a celebration of many different kinds of loving relationships and Schöne sings about them in a jaunty, cheerful way. The song ends on the mediant with a lengthy burst of harmonic resolution from the accompanying band. As other songs will testify, Schöne successfully avoided conflict with the state, but at the same time presented thought-provoking ideas about the situation in the GDR.

Barbara Thalheim's song *Ich habe einen Freund verloren* [I have lost a friend]¹³ describes the void she experiences as a result of her loss. Thalheim reminisces about the relationship she had with a man who seems to have been trustworthy and made no attempt to disguise his real self. This is described in the following way:

Sonntags trug er weiße Hemden
Daß man sah, daß jeweils Sonntag war
Doch er hatte keine zweite Haut
Und ich hab ihm nie umsonst getraut

[On Sundays he wore white shirts / in this
way you could tell that it was Sunday. /
However, he had no second skin / And I
never trusted him in vain.]

There is a musical contrast between the stanza and the refrain. The melody for the stanza flows evenly and the listener experiences the enthusiasm Thalheim feels for the relationship she had with her friend. The music in the refrain, on the other hand, reflects Thalheim's grief at losing her friend. It is melancholy in nature, there is less movement in the melody and a softening in Thalheim's voice:

Er ist ein Verlust
Er hat sich verliebt
Dabei kam unsre Freundschaft unters Rad
Doch er hat nun eine Frau

[He is a loss / He has fallen in love / Because
of that our friendship has come to an end /
However, he now has a woman.]

The second stanza contains what could be seen as a political statement: Thalheim describes her friend as a person who gives encouragement and who had taught her to read *Neues Deutschland* [*New Germany*], the official newspaper of the ruling Sozialistische Einheitspartei or SED [Socialist Unity Party], not an easy task in her opinion. She goes on to sing about the white shirt her friend wears which she maintains is too pure for love. Symbolic of the friend's adherence to peaceful political solutions is the repeated reference to the colour white, which has for centuries been a symbol of purity and of peace. One is left with the question of her friend's political affiliations and whether in fact he taught her to read the state-controlled newspaper from a different, not necessarily official, perspective and that his criticism was of the less than peaceful attitude of the government in its relations with other countries. Thalheim concludes this stanza with the statement that a price is paid for any prejudice held—'Jedes Vorurteil hat seinen Preis' [Every prejudice has its price]—and the listener must again ask who is guilty of having prejudices, she, her friend or the state.

Perhaps one of the most poignant of Thalheim's songs, written in the seventies, is *Für Greta* [*For Greta*],¹⁴ which combines a spoken text putting Adam and Greta Kuckow into historical perspective with a poem, written by Adam Kuckow for his wife Greta, which has been set to music. In this song it is obvious that the music plays a very important role, especially in the first part where the text is spoken. Adam and Greta Kuckow, who were active in the Berlin Underground Movement during the Third Reich, were arrested by the Gestapo in 1942 because for nine years they had been involved in anti-fascist activities. Adam was sentenced to death and Greta was to serve time in prison. As Thalheim relates the story of Adam and Greta Kuckow, the accompaniment also is complex, dissonant and serious, with no regular pulse and polyphonic in texture. Its ponderous nature exhibits no development and is perhaps analogous to the lack of predictable contours of life in the underground.

As Thalheim begins Adam Kuckow's poem, *Memento—Vor meinem eigenen Tod* [*Memento—Before my own death*], the music changes from classical to folk, with guitar accompaniment. The guitar is joined by string quartet instruments at the end of the sung rendition of the poem. For the final section of the poem, which is partly spoken and partly sung, the classical music takes over. Kuckow's poem expresses his sadness at the final parting in death from his wife, and his

apology that he has not spoken of the depth of their love in his poetry before, maintaining that their love is immeasurable. He recognises how much more difficult for her the judgment of the Gestapo is, for as he writes: 'Mit dem eigenen Tod stirbt man nur. / Mit dem Tod der anderen muß man leben' [With one's own death one only dies. With the death of the other person one has to live.]. The presence of the two styles of music makes this work more complex and underlines its significance as a reflection of the complex emotions implied by the text. Thalheim's words draw the past and the plight of the Kuckows into the present, and without pause she proceeds to sing Kopka's song *Was mich ergreift* [What I am moved by].¹⁵ The transition to Kopka's song occurs with a persistent and regular drum beat in the background, which symbolises the beat of the heart about which Kopka writes in his song. It becomes clear that what has left an impression on Thalheim [Kopka] is that the work begun by the Kuckows continued even after they were removed from the scene of action, and that this is true of any effort which is made in the GDR to achieve the goals for which the politically interested and active citizens are striving. Thalheim sings the following words:

Was mich ergreift
Ist ein Weg, der schwer zu gehn
Und zu wissen, wir gehn ihn doch
Was mich ergreift
Kost' kein Geld und macht mich reich
Dies zu wissen: Wir hörn nie auf.

[What I am moved by / is a path which is difficult to follow / and to know, that we are still on it / What I am moved by / does not cost any money and makes me rich / to know this: We will never stop.]

There is obviously comfort to be found in the comparison of the two periods of history in which a struggle is taking place, comfort to be found in loving relationships, even if they do not last for a long time, and in the knowledge that neither the love nor the struggle is in vain. This occurs, according to Fritz Jochen Kopka, writer of most of Thalheim's song texts, despite the fact that the State tries to control every aspect of the people's lives. The inference is that the strength of love and commitment has the power to undermine the State. Throughout the song the beat of the heart is everpresent in the musical accompaniment, be it simply in the pulse or in the beat of a drum, to result in the final stanza which states:

Einmal bleibt das Herz stehn -
Bestimmt zu früh
Was wir mal begonnen haben
Endet damit nie

[Some time the heart will stop / certainly too early / What we have started / will not end with it.]

The repetition of this final stanza underlines these several forms of comfort and leaves the listener to consider the parallel between past and present, to form the conclusion that, in times where political ideologies and forces suppress thoughts and feelings, love in its many forms takes on maximum importance. The variation in the texture of the stringed instruments is analogous to the many forms that love can take.

Whatever form the critical love songs took, they stood in defiance of a system which discouraged spontaneous emotion and did not acknowledge the necessity for discussion of psychological needs and the necessity for these to be met in order for people to find fulfilment, both as individuals and as part of the collective. The love songs discussed and defied the repressive attitude of the government to speak out about the emotional needs of the singers/songwriters. This made listeners aware of themselves as individuals with emotions that needed to be consciously, and yet spontaneously expressed, not ignored and/or controlled by exterior forces. In this way they made a significant contribution to the political opposition in the GDR.

Notes

- 1 Freya Klier, *Lüg Vaterland* (Kindler, München: Erziehung in der DDR, 1990).
- 2 Hans Joachim Maaz, *Der Gefühlsstau* (Berlin: Argon Verlag, 1990), p.91. All German texts in this article have been translated by Victoria Hardwick.
- 3 Maaz, *Gefühlsstau*, p.73.
- 4 Wolf Biermann, 'Frühling auf dem Mont Klamott', *Liederbuch Wolf Biermann*, Polydor, 815 851-1, 1974.
- 5 Maaz, *Gefühlsstau*, p.133.
- 6 Bettina Wegner, 'Nimm deinen Segen nicht von mir', *Bettina Wegner: Wenn meiner Lieder nicht mehr stimmen*, CBS, 1980.
- 7 Bettina Wegner, 'Für meine weggegangenen Freunde', *Bettina Wegner: Sind so kleine Hände*, CBS, 1979.
- 8 Wegner, *Sind so kleine Hände*, 'Immer wieder eine Lanze werfen'.
- 9 Michael Sallmann, Record insert, *Queitsch, Trikont Unsere Stimme*, US-0061, 1979.
- 10 Sallmann, 'Wiesenlied', *Queitsch*.
- 11 Maaz, *Gefühlsstau*, pp.70-71. Maaz describes the process of repression and the effect it had on the people in the following way:
'Dieser Unterdrückungsprozeß wird im Laufe der Zeit so umfassend, daß die meisten Menschen sich der wahren Zusammenhänge nicht mehr bewußt sind, d.h. sie wissen nicht mehr, wonach sie sich eigentlich sehnen, sondern empfinden nur noch ein dumpfes Gefühl von Unwohlsein

und Unzufriedenheit, was sich schließlich auch zu Symptomen und Erkrankungen weiterentwickeln kann ... So wird aus Essen—Fressen, aus Trinken—Saufen, aus lustvoller Sexualität—aggressives Abbumsen oder Promiskuität, aus Liebe—Liebesforderung und Liebeserklärung.'

[This process of repression became in the course of time so thorough that most people were no longer conscious of how it had actually come about, that is to say, they no longer knew what they really longed for, rather they felt only a vague feeling of unwellness and discontent, which can develop into symptoms and illnesses. ... In this way eating becomes gluttony, drinking becomes boozing, lusty sexuality becomes

aggressive screwing or promiscuity, and love turns into demands and declarations of love.]

12 Gerhard Schöne, 'Alles Liebe', *Du hast es nur noch nicht probiert 1: Gerhard Schöne Live*, Deutsche Schallplatten, 0575 047, 1988.

13 Barbara Thalheim, 'Ich habe einen Freund verloren', *Barbara Thalheim: Lebenslauf*, 1978 [no other details available].

14 Thalheim, 'Für Greta' and 'Memento—Vor meinem eigenen Tod', *Lebenslauf: Barbara Thalheim und Streichquartett*, 1978 [no other details available].

15 Thalheim, 'Was mich ergreift', *Lebenslauf*.