

Schütz, Johannes

Home is where the people rules! : the idea of socialist Heimat and its emotional regime in the GDR

Studia historica Brunensia. 2022, vol. 69, iss. 1, pp. 195-212

ISSN 1803-7429 (print); ISSN 2336-4513 (online)

Stable URL (DOI): <https://doi.org/10.5817/SHB2022-1-10>

Stable URL (handle): <https://hdl.handle.net/11222.digilib/145165>

License: [CC BY-NC-ND 4.0 International](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/4.0/)

Access Date: 29. 11. 2024

Version: 20220831

Terms of use: Digital Library of the Faculty of Arts, Masaryk University provides access to digitized documents strictly for personal use, unless otherwise specified.

Home is Where the People Rules!

The Idea of Socialist Heimat and its Emotional Regime in the GDR

Johannes Schütz / johannes.schuetz1@tu-dresden

Faculty of Arts, Humanities and Social Science, Department of Modern and Contemporary History, Technische Universität Dresden

Abstract

In the post-war years, the German Democratic Republic competed against the Federal Republic of Germany for providing a new beginning in Nazi-Germany. Thus, the ruling Socialist Unity Party started a broad campaign to acknowledge the new order as a prerequisite of Heimat. An emotional regime forms the backdrop to the theory of socialist Heimat, in which the people loves the state, the party and its neighbours. This paper examines the ideology of a socialist Heimat and the emotional regime, which used the political leaders of the country to direct the patriotic feelings of their inhabitants towards socialism. At the end, this essay additionally offers some remarks on the impact of this process and focuses on how Heimat became a special notion in the GDR with particular aspects.

Keywords

Heimat, GDR, Socialism, History of Concepts, History of Emotions.

Introduction

The question of home, and especially a home of happiness, a happy home, is maybe the most relevant question of politics nowadays.¹ What home means and where it is, changes significantly in our world, since more and more people are leaving the place they used to live in and are searching for a happy home. However, socialist theorists of the German Democratic Republic (GDR) had no problem answering the question about a happy home, although the world faced insecurity and a rising cold war. From the very beginning in 1946, the Socialist Unity Party (Sozialistische Einheitspartei Deutschland, SED) had planned to design a new society and to build up new homes. War and destruction, guilt and shame about the Holocaust made the search for home most urgent in post-war Germany. In German, however, a discourse with a special tradition provided the prerequisites to “feeling at home”. To explain that, I would like to start with the history of the idea of home in Germany. Because it has its own tradition, I will above all use the German term *Heimat* in the following paper. German scholars discuss regularly whether *Heimat* is translatable or not. I think Susanne Scharnowski showed convincingly that other languages and cultures shape and imagine an ideal home, too, that *Heimat* was neither unique nor an exclusively German issue.² I prefer the term regardless, because it implies a particular notion of internal contention. The German discourse of *Heimat* habitually reflects the tension between region and nation.³ Due to the political separation of the German states, depicting the *Heimat* also meant commenting on the relation to the German nation.

Already in the 19th century, *Heimat* became the most important driving belt to translate the abstract imagination of national community into local contexts. *Heimat* thus became a key to integrating Imperial Germany by being the most important representation of the German nation: *Heimat* was the hinge between the local area and the overarching political structure of the Reich. The numerous “*Heimaten*” made it possible to connect the local area with the forged national state, to root Germans in their region and at the same time to create a community for all Germans and inspire a sense of unity. Germans regarded their nation as a community of Bavarians and Prussians, Württemberger and Saxons, their particular histories, dialects and traditions constituted the German nation. By connecting *Heimat* and nation, a specifically German national consciousness emerged.⁴

1 Schüle, Christian: *Heimat*. Ein Phantomschmerz. München 2017.

2 Scharnowski, Susanne: *Heimat*. Geschichte eines Missverständnisses. Darmstadt 2019.

3 *Heimat. A German Dream*. Regional Loyalties and National Identity in German Culture 1890–1990. Edd. E. Boa et R. Palfreyman. New York 2000; *Heimat gestern und heute*. Hg. von E. Costadura. Bielefeld 2016.

4 Applegate, Celia: *A Nation of Provincials*. The German Idea of *Heimat*. Berkeley 1990; Confino, Alon: *The Nation as Local Metaphor*. Württemberg, Imperial Germany and National Memory, 1871–1918. Chapel Hill – London 1997; Confino, Alon: *Germany as a Culture of Remembrance*. Promises and Limits of Writing History. Chapel Hill 2006.

A German Heimat-movement founded itself and translated these images, narratives and metaphors into concrete practices designing the respective Heimat.⁵ This is the historical background to the discourse of Heimat in the GDR, which this essay will focus on. Its main hypothesis is that speaking of a socialist Heimat was thought to legitimize the new political order and to gather the people under a stable promise of home and happiness.

Heimat in a Socialist Society

Socialist Heimat was nothing very new; already in the Weimar years, communist leaders spoke about communism and home.⁶ However, this combination is deeply rooted in the history of the German discourse, and that is the reason why the socialist party could adopt it very easily, yet had to alter and elaborate it very fundamentally. The SED adopted this tradition and transformed Heimat to match the purposes of the government's official politics: From the 1950s on, most of the practices constructing Heimat in the GDR were only possible if they related to the development of socialism and the work of the party. Local chronologists, local history teachers and brigade leaders had to adhere to the symbolic order and the hierarchy of images in their activities; they had to be positive about the role of the SED and, to varying extents, to the ideal ideological superstructure.⁷ In the following, I will go through a few contemporary attempts, which define socialist Heimat.

Before doing so, I would like to give some remarks on the source material: These theoretical drafts extend from the 1950s to the 1980s and vary in increasing degrees of abstraction.⁸ The texts also differ considerably in the amount of argumentation and scope of justification – some were designed as a short essay in a periodical, others constitute the preliminary theoretical remarks of educational works and still others are

- 5 *Antimodernismus und Reform*. Beiträge zur Geschichte der deutschen Heimatbewegung. Hg. von E. Kluebing. Darmstadt 1991; Hartung, Werner: *Konservative Zivilisationskritik und regionale Identität*. Am Beispiel der niedersächsischen Heimatbewegung 1895 bis 1919. Hannover 1991.
- 6 Schwanitz, Henrik: *Heimatkonstruktionen in historischer Perspektive II*. „Linke“ Heimatbilder und -konstruktionen in der Weimarer Republik – die sächsische Naturfreundebewegung. In: Saxorum. Blog für interdisziplinäre Landeskunde / <https://saxorum.hypotheses.org/5620>, cited 18.03.2021.
- 7 A lot of work is done by Jan Palmowski and Thomas Schaarschmidt in this field of research: Palmowski, Jan: *Inventing a Socialist Nation*. Heimat and Politics of Everyday Life in the GDR. New York 2009; Schaarschmidt, Thomas: *Regionalkultur und Diktatur*. Sächsische Heimatbewegung im Dritten Reich und in der SBZ/DDR. Köln 2001; Schaarschmidt, Thomas: *Sozialistische Heimat? Der sozialistische Heimatbegriff und seine gesellschaftliche Aneignung*. In: *Heimat in der Diktatur*. Hg. von J. Klose. Leipzig 2014, pp. 15–30.
- 8 Kneschke, Karl: *Über den neuen Heimatbegriff*. In: *Natur und Heimat* 7, 1958, pp. 4–8; Mohr, Hubert – Hühns, Erik: *Einführung in die Heimatgeschichte*. Berlin 1959; Gemkow, Heinrich: *Über den Wert und Mißbrauch der Heimatliebe*. Gedanken zu Inhalt und Funktion des Heimatbegriffs. In: Beiträge zur Geschichte der deutschen Arbeiterbewegung 3/4, 1962, pp. 659–670; Bachmann, Manfred: *Zum sozialistischen Heimatbegriff*. In: *Sächsische Heimatblätter* 9, 1963, pp. 1–6; Hühns, Erik: *Heimat, Vaterland, Nation*. Berlin 1969; Lange, Günter: *Heimat. Realität und Aufgabe*. Berlin 1975; Wimmer, Walter: *Sozialistische Heimat – Errungenschaft und Aufgabe*. In: *Einheit* 12, 1978, p. 1228–1235; Scholz, Günter – Birkner, Siegfried – Günther, Karl-Heinz – Rudolf, Roland: *Erziehung zur Heimat- und Vaterlandsliebe*. Berlin 1988.

historical-materialistic treatises of considerable length. However, there is a common argumentative core, which is stable and which is passed on from text to text. This core I am going to reveal in the following. To sum up briefly in advance, I would like to emphasize that all these texts conceptualize the idea of Heimat by dissociating themselves from the Federal Republic of Germany (FRG). It was important to set oneself apart from the “class enemy” and highlight the achievements of socialism in the struggle for Heimat. Furthermore, the conceptual references to the categories such as fatherland and nation varied. Depending on the respective contemporary understanding of which part of the German people the GDR represented, they related the idea of Heimat to a German fatherland or to a newly defined socialist nation.⁹

At the beginning, there was Karl Kneschke. He had made a name for himself as a sports and cultural functionary in the Czechoslovakia Republic and became the state secretary of the culture league just a short time after he arrived in the Soviet Zone in February 1946. The cultural league for a democratic renewal (German: Der Kulturbund zur demokratischen Erneuerung) as it was called officially, was the main institution to summon Communist intellectuals as well as lay historians and former members of other associations. This cultural league framed the biography of most of Heimatler, those who were committed to building Heimat.¹⁰ This is also true for Karl Kneschke. He became the editor of one of the league’s early magazines *Natur und Heimat*. Finally, in 1951, he was appointed Federal Secretary of the Culture League in Berlin.¹¹

Kneschke was one of the first to define the idea of Heimat after the “socialist revolution” in the GDR. In *Natur und Heimat*, he emphasized that the prerequisite for having Heimat is that people literally get a home – i.e. their material needs would be met, food and housing would be available to them.¹² Based on this premise, he worked out the specificity to the socialist concept of Heimat. Since it was possible for all working people in the GDR to meet these basic needs and not have to compete with others for them, they could feel at home in their environment as well as in the GDR.¹³

Kneschke opposed historical and current political orders in Germany and claimed that former governments and states could not offer Heimat because they were not capable of dealing with the internal contradictions of their formation of society – as it

9 Palmwoski, J.: *Inventing*, pp. 68–74.

10 Zimmer, Andreas: *Der Kulturbund in der SBZ und in der DDR*. Eine ostdeutsche Kulturvereinigung im Wandel der Zeit zwischen 1945 und 1990. Wiesbaden 2019.

11 Köpp, Ulrike: *Karl Kneschke und die Beweggründe zum Kulturbund für demokratische Erneuerung Deutschlands*. In: *Weimarer Beiträge* 60, 2014, pp. 245–265.

12 Kneschke, Karl: *Über den neuen Heimatbegriff*. In: *Natur und Heimat* 7, 1958, p. 4.

13 Ibid. “Die sozialistische Heimat ist die Heimat von Menschen, die einander nicht ausbeuten, die das höchste Gut der Heimat, sich selbst, den Menschen, in den Mittelpunkt des Aufbaues stellen, die die Natur verändern und damit ihre eigene Natur zum Besseren führen, zum sozialistischen Humanismus. Bei uns wird eine neue, eine sozialistische Kultur gepflegt, die für alle arbeitenden Menschen Schönheit und Glück bereithält, die das fortschrittliche kulturelle Erbe, die die Tiere und Pflanzen, die Schönheit der Landschaft und alle Denkmale der Natur und der Kunst schätzt und wahr und neue Werte zu den alten fügt. Für diese Heimat, ihre Heimat, die sie mit ihren eigenen Händen einrichten und aufbauen, schön wie nie zuvor, können die arbeitenden Menschen ihre Liebe verströmen lassen in einem sozialistischen Patriotismus, der im Gefühl seiner Kraft das Wort prägt: ‘Groß und unser’.“

might sound in orthodox-Marxists words. Heimat, however, he regarded as a place of security and identity. At home, human existence is taken care of, so that it fits naturally into its environment. In a world of alienation and exploitation, Kneschke could not see this self-evident connection. Furthermore, he linked Heimat to the German nation, in his terms: the fatherland. Kneschke divided into closer and farther, or small and large Heimat. He thus focused on the interdependence of local community and social order. In socialist society, people were set into power as well as enabled to develop their individuality, he claimed. From this advancement, he derived the love for this socialist country.

His definition already covers the key understanding of socialist Heimat, later writings elaborated on it theoretically and developed it systematically: Heimat was only possible in the GDR since the people could design their own *Lebenswelt* for the first time in German history.

One quick detour on my terminology: I prefer to use the German term *Lebenswelt*, because it summarizes all aspects of practices and experiences human beings engage in everyday life and emphasizes the institutionalisation of knowledge and practices.¹⁴ The SED tried to transform this *Lebenswelt* of all inhabitants of their new state, but also constantly narrated this transformation at the same time. In their version, it sounded this way: The first generation of communist leaders revolutionized living standards and social interaction in the GDR, people in the GDR thus achieved a new level of human existence. These achievements should motivate later generations both to cooperate and to love the socialist Heimat. Even if the following arguments and quotations might seem redundant, the chronological enumeration will show the particular discourse of the idea of Heimat in the GDR in more detail.

In the 1950s, millions fled to the FRG. Therefore, the SED wanted to evoke a particular patriotism, a socialist patriotism. People were supposed to identify fully with the new state. Attempts to define the socialist Heimat were aligned with these efforts because almost every East German theorist regarded Heimat as a central source to legitimate the GDR and identify with the new order. Only a few months after Karl Kneschke had published his notion of socialist Heimat, further statements on this discussion were printed in the journal *Natur und Heimat*. It began with Erik Hühns. Like Kneschke, Hühns assumed key positions in the Cultural League and became a famous actor in the discourse in the years to come.¹⁵ However, his first text goes back to a conference in 1958 and explicates a theory of socialist Heimat.¹⁶ In his brief statement, Erik Hühns quotes a worker to illustrate his definition of socialist Heimat, who clearly states that the workers and peasants now have a beautiful Heimat because they have taken the construction of it into their own hands. Again, the historical comparison served as a contrast film. The ironworker referred to his own experience and highlighted that it was difficult to feel at home in capitalism. Now he saw factories and industrial sites integrated into the horizon of the Heimat. Not just nature, but the whole *Lebenswelt* offered ideal living conditions

14 See: Schütz, Alfred – Luckmann, Thomas: *Strukturen der Lebenswelt*. Munich 2003, pp. 27–35.

15 Palmowski, J.: *Nation*, p. 68.

16 *Um unsere sozialistische Heimat*. Referat und Diskussionsbeiträge einer Tagung am 20. Juni 1958 in Berlin. Berlin 1958. See also: Palmowski, J.: *Nation*, pp. 68–69.

and thus made the GDR worth living to him. As a prerequisite for this, Hühns explicitly named the socialist society and the work of the SED.¹⁷

This again is the core of the idea of socialist Heimat. Hühns, as well as all other theoretical writers, highlighted activity and creation as central features of the new understanding. The first argument is historical: Not only communists used the term Heimat, rather it had a long and inglorious tradition in German history. Already the NSDAP and Nazi leaders tried to mobilize for their politics people who were attached to their region and location.¹⁸ In every text of the socialist GDR, however, the representatives of the new, socialist idea of Heimat made a dedicated and mostly detailed effort to distinguish their conception consistently and explicitly from all previous definitions, simply because they regarded it as a part of bourgeois ideology or fascist demagoguery.¹⁹ They set hard and vehement frontiers in all definitions; they saw ideologues and demagogues who abused the “noble” sense of Heimat and used it to disguise the real social conditions.²⁰ This discussion was perfectly suited for arguing against the Federal Republic. In the FRG, they claimed, the policy of concealment and manipulative indoctrination continued in order to secure power for the “exploiting class”. Furthermore, these authors asserted the men of power in Bonn were preparing a nuclear strike against socialist states to reclaim former German territories, which were once Heimat for many people.²¹ Hence, they attacked the idea of Heimat in the Federal Republic of Germany. Imagining Heimat provided them with many means legitimizing their own position: Only socialism could offer peace and security.

These insults against the other German state were turned positive and used to enhance the socialist project: “The Heimat in socialism is the social and natural environment free from exploitation and oppression which man is able to shape more and more according to his needs and which from external conditions of existence becomes actual possession.”²² Or in the words of Hubert Mohr and Erik Hühns: „In this sense, Heimat is the area that the individual consciously experiences and shapes as home – the social area of life, the image of which man himself co-determines through his work and his struggle for social progress and the political liberation of the working class and the peasants; he is therefore bound by many factual and emotional ties.”²³

17 Hühns, Erik: *Heimatliebe als schöpferisches Bewußtsein*, Diskussionsbeitrag. In: Sozialistische Heimat – das Werk unserer Hände. In: *Natur und Heimat* 9, 1958, pp. 257–259.

18 Schaarschmidt, T.: *Regionalkultur*, pp. 505–508.

19 For instance: Hühns, E.: *Heimat, Nation, Vaterland*, p. 15–34; Lange, G.: *Heimat*, pp. 19–54.

20 Wimmer, W.: *Sozialistische Heimat*, p. 1233.

21 Most aggressive: Gemkow, H.: *Über den Wert und Mißbrauch*, p. 665. Also all quotations are taken from there.

22 Scholz, G.: *Erziehung*, p. 15: “Die Heimat im Sozialismus ist die von Ausbeutung und Unterdrückung freie soziale und natürliche Umwelt, die der Mensch mehr und mehr nach seinen Bedürfnissen zu gestalten vermag und die von äußeren Existenzbedingung zum tatsächlichen Besitz wird.”

23 Mohr, H. – Hühns, E.: *Heimatgeschichte*, p. 8: “In diesem Sinne ist die Heimat das Gebiet, das der einzelne bewußt als Heimat erlebt und gestaltet – der soziale Lebensbereich, dessen Bild der Mensch selbst durch seine Arbeit und seinen Kampf für den gesellschaftlichen Fortschritt und die politische Befreiung der Arbeiterklasse und der Bauern mitbestimmt und dem er daher durch viele sachliche und gefühlsmäßige Bindungen verhaftet ist.”

The possibility of democratic participation, the opportunity to both shape one's own *Lebenswelt* as well as to be able to determine the political framework are named as the prerequisites for being at home. In addition, of course, all authors did not even doubt that these prerequisites were only given in the GDR. In both a diachronic and a synchronous comparison, the comrades concluded that only socialism enables political power of "all classes and strata" and thus "*realizes the interests of the whole people*".²⁴ Neither the predecessor states nor the Federal Republic were in any way just or democratic and left the workers and peasants, and therefore the people, to determine their own living conditions. With the "revolutionary upheavals", i.e. the founding of the GDR and the building of socialism, they saw a political order on German soil for the first time, which enabled the people to self-rule and thus prevented exploitation. By dramatizing violently, Walter Wimmer elevated the GDR to the only legitimate attempt at a new beginning and, above all, of democratic renewal:

„In reality, we [have] cleansed the Heimat of what desecrated it, of the rule and politics of the German bankers, big industrialists, Junkers and militarists as well as of the intellectual filth and cultural rubbish that their ideologues produced. We have created political, economic and social conditions that enable the working people to identify with their Heimat, the socialist German Democratic Republic, their socialist fatherland out of their own interests. Only here, where the Heimat really belongs to the people, can every citizen identify with his socialist fatherland.“²⁵

Erik Hühns und Hubert Mohr may have stated it more elaborately but the message amounts to nearly the same.²⁶ All these writers clearly marked what is special about the new concept, the socialist concept of Heimat. Heimat was connected solely to the GDR. At least for Germany they claimed, however, that only the socialist state really offered Heimat, since it framed not only a natural environment but also had to be seen as the people's project: everyone was called to construct and build up, everyone had to identify as worker on his own future. This definition underlined the official understanding:

24 Scholz, G: *Erziehung*, p. 12.

25 Wimmer, W.: *Sozialistische Heimat*, p. 1233: "Wir [haben] die Heimat in der Realität von dem gesäubert [...], was sie schändete, von der Herrschaft und Politik der deutschen Bankiers, Großindustriellen, Junker und Militaristen sowie von dem geistigen Schmutz und kulturellem Unrat, den deren Ideologen hervorbrachten. Wir haben politische, ökonomische und soziale Bedingungen geschaffen, die es den Werktätigen ermöglichen, sich aus ihren eigenen Interessen heraus mit ihrer Heimat, der sozialistischen Deutschen Demokratischen Republik, ihrem sozialistischen Vaterlande zu identifizieren. Erst hier, wo die Heimat wirklich dem Volke eigen ist, kann sich jeder Bürger mit seinem sozialistischen Vaterland identifizieren."

26 Mohr, H. – Hühns, E.: *Heimatgeschichte*, p. 8: "Heimat ist zunächst der engere natürliche und soziale Lebensbereich, der mir lieb und vertraut ist, dessen Bild ich selbst durch meine Arbeit mitbestimme, im weiteren Sinne dann erst die Nation. Eine Heimat in diesem Sinne haben die Werktätigen in Deutschland aber nur in der Deutschen Demokratischen Republik, denn erst die siegreiche Arbeiterklasse ist imstande, den neuen Begriff der sozialistischen Heimat zu prägen – entsprechend der neuen, sozialistischen Wirklichkeit. In Deutschland trifft der Begriff der weiteren Heimat in diesem Sinne heute, da auf seinem Territorium zwei Staaten mit unterschiedlicher Gesellschaftsordnung existieren, noch nicht für die Nation zu, sondern muß auf die Deutsche Demokratische Republik bezogen werden, denn nur hier, unter den Voraussetzungen unserer volksdemokratischen Ordnung, der Schaffung des Volkseigentums und der Schaffung eines demokratischen Staates, an dessen Spitze die Partei der Arbeiterklasse steht, kann die werktätige Bevölkerung wirklich in der sozialen Gemeinschaft mitbestimmen und damit auch der natürlichen Komponente der Heimatbegriffs, dem Gebiet, durch ihre Arbeit ein bestimmtes Gepräge geben."

Home was where the people ruled – and this condition was claimed for the GDR exclusively. To put it in Manfred Bachmann’s words: “Only socialism makes Heimat a real possession for them.”²⁷

What these authors did not say explicitly here: This gift demanded participation in the construction of Heimat and such construction meant building up socialism. They defamed the passive enjoyment of nature as part of bourgeois ideology and accepted only the active contribution to an evolving socialist society as an adequate appropriation of the idea.²⁸ Those, who did not participate in these efforts were at least suspicious and hardly full members of the “socialist human community”. Therefore, Erik Hühns repeatedly emphasized that appropriating Heimat means developing a socialist consciousness. He intervened frequently in the discourse and his efforts culminated in his book *Heimat – Vaterland – Nation* in 1968.²⁹ This essay unfolds its theoretical ambitions in a language that is thoroughly vernacular and lacks the standard Marxist formula. Hence, this text is almost suitable for the mass, ties together the discussions of the 1950s and 1960s, and gives all those who were engaged by their Heimat an understandable introduction to the historic-materialist concept of Heimat. In this work he claims that by shaping the socialist society actively, as demanded by the newly established moral standards, Heimat and fatherland fell into one.³⁰

For him, the identification with the socialist state was not only a condition to come but yet became reality. The people of the GDR would recognize the progressive regime and the achievements of socialism and then would learn to love them. Before researching this emotional regime, I would like to make a few remarks on the connection between Heimat and fatherland. Hühns et alii related the visible transformation of everyone’s environment to the political order. To know the extensive changes and manifold improvements in life for the masses through building up socialism in their closer region meant to them to recognize the transformation of the entire state and, thus, was the reason to emote socialist patriotism. The argument unfolds in a similar way to the traditional Heimat discourse and reflects narratives of identification with the socialist state in a narrow framework. Since the fatherland was previously owned by the very small ruling classes – first the German nobility, later then the bourgeoisie – for the majority of the population it was not fatherland since they had been exploited and alienated. The “bourgeois fatherland ideology” rather demanded to identify with state power and forced the people into numerous wars by calling upon patriotic duty, which brought benefits only to the few and death to the many.³¹

Thus, the argument runs towards its goal: again only in the German Democratic Republic would workers and peasants in an alliance with all “progressive forces” create their own state and thus at the same time their fatherland. This achievement is to be

27 Bachmann, M.: *Heimat*, p. 5: “Erst der Sozialismus macht ihnen die Heimat zum wirklichen Besitz.“

28 Hühns, E.: *Heimat, Vaterland, Nation*, pp. 3–6, 9, 28.

29 Ibid.

30 Ibid, p. 31–35.

31 Gemkow, H.: *Über den Wert und Mißbrauch*, pp. 661–665; Hühns, E.: *Heimat, Vaterland, Nation*, pp. 39–68.

recognized and forms the basis for true patriotism; as Erik Hühns argued in detail in *Heimat, Vaterland, Nation*: „But one remains connected to a true fatherland out of love, out of national responsibility, out of socialist consciousness, in it one finds one’s Heimat.“³² By making the same arguments and with the same combination of unremitting rejection of the other Germany and glorifying emphasis on one’s own state, these texts imagined the GDR as the democratic, free and promising country. Here the people participated in past developments and future promises, here they owned home and fatherland together. The fatherland became a state for the whole people.

The nation, on the other hand, represents a community that is not connected by a purely institutional framework but is constituted by a variety of similarities such as language, religion or culture. Of course, the nation is not thought of as an ahistorical entity, rather those who argue historically and dialectically recognized that a nation could also change and thus had prepared the reasons why an independent national community had developed in the GDR. The already established pattern of class antagonism also serves as an argument. In this chapter, too, national history is told as a struggle of the exploited against the exploiters, to whom the national idea would never have had any meaning as a value in itself but rather served as an argument for coming to terms with the circumstances.³³ The German working class, on the other hand, had clearly and consistently represented national interests from the beginning, so it was arranged as logical argument that the “national question” could only be solved by the working class, namely by leading to national unity under socialist auspices.³⁴

In both aspects, however, the figure emerges that historical research had depicted for earlier processes of communalization: Heimat, nation and fatherland were intertwined in a complementary manner; the idea of Heimat ensures identification with a locally restricted community, which can be experienced directly in every-day life. This identity was then compiled from the numerous locations and transferred to the state structures that encompassed them: Heimat is at the same time the village, the district and the GDR. The leading party demanded contributions to the construction of socialism on all levels, but most of the people implemented their input locally. Regarding this discursive background, all practices creating Heimat appear as realizations of an imagined socialist Heimat.

This extensive and varied discussion of arguments for a new concept of Heimat, even if there was no real development but a more or less redundant copying of arguments, shows how these arguments provided a valuable resource legitimizing the new state GDR by tying people to their Heimat. Especially the crisis around June 17, 1953 revealed

32 Hühns, E.: *Heimat, Vaterland, Nation*, p. 67: “Einem wahren Vaterland aber bleibt man verbunden aus Liebe, aus nationaler Verantwortung, aus sozialistischem Bewußtsein heraus, in ihm findet man seine Heimat.“ Only the GDR can be a fatherland for workers and peasants, since „die Produktionsmittel Eigentum des Volkes sind, ihre Entwicklung sowie die Produktion geplant werden und jeder entsprechend seinen Fähigkeiten und seinem gesellschaftlichen Einsatzwillen an der Leitung und Lenkung der wirtschaftlichen und politischen Prozesse beteiligt sein kann“. Hühns, E.: *Heimat, Vaterland, Nation*, p. 59.

33 Hühns, E.: *Heimat, Vaterland, Nation*, pp. 69–95.

34 Scholz, G.: *Erziehung*, pp. 11–14.

paradigmatically the discrepancy between the claim to power and the views of the many, between utopian goals and real constellations, between approval and rejection of the socialist project. From then on, the SED in power promoted socialist patriotism in the GDR, for which above all the practices of Heimat were to be utilized. Furthermore, love of Heimat was recognized and promoted as an important resource; a real regime of loving Heimat emerged.

The importance of loving Heimat

Many politicians and theorists in the GDR believed themselves to face no less than a third world war: “The imperialists in West Germany are using it again [linking Heimat with ideas of living space] for the ideological preparation of a third world war. The consequent rejection of these ideas and the development of a new socialist consciousness of Heimat are therefore a current political task that all researchers and educators must be clear about.”³⁵

All citizens of the GDR were taught that politicians in the Federal Republic were already preparing the war. They heard the call to prevent war and to defend their Heimat –paradoxically with weapons. “Anyone who has learnt to love his Heimat as a child will not ignore its beauties as an adult [...]. He will defend it, with weapon in hands if necessary, against his enemies, the enemies of socialism.”³⁶ Thus, the emotional regime starts with the opposite feeling to love: hate.

Using the term emotional regime, I am referring here to the work of William Reddy. Reddy developed nothing less than a new framework for the history of emotions. I would like to highlight two aspects of his concept briefly in order to theorize my own findings. First, William Reddy started his work by combining cultural studies and cognitive psychology and did so in a very innovative fashion³⁷: The core of his concept is the *emotive*. He thinks of an emotive as a type of speech act, i.e. a proposition as a special kind of action. In the act of verbalizing his or her own feelings, every human being only just creates the very emotion in question, by saying “I hate you” one feels hate.³⁸ Second, in his main work *The Navigation of Feeling* he underlines that emotions are shaped by social contexts; furthermore, cultural and political discourses direct feelings in particular

35 Mohr, H. – Hühns, E.: *Heimatgeschichte*, p. 9: “Die Imperialisten in Westdeutschland benutzen es [die Verknüpfung von Heimat mit Lebensraumvorstellungen] aufs neue zur ideologischen Vorbereitung eines dritten Weltkrieges. Die konsequente Ablehnung dieser Ideen und die Entwicklung eines neuen sozialistischen Heimatbewußtseins sind deshalb eine aktuelle politische Aufgabe, über die sich alle Heimatforscher und Erzieher klar werden müssen.“

36 Mohr, H. – Hühns, E.: *Heimatgeschichte*, p. 29: “Wer als Kind die Heimat lieben gelernt hat, wird als Erwachsener nicht achtlos an ihren Schönheiten vorbeigehen [...]. Er wird sie, wenn notwendig auch mit der Waffe in der Hand, gegen ihre Feinde, die Feinde des Sozialismus, verteidigen.“

37 See for a splendid summary of William Reddy’s theory: Plamper, Jan: *The History of Emotions*. An Introduction. Oxford 2015, pp. 251–264.

38 Reddy, William M.: *Against Constructivism*. The Historical Ethnography of Emotions. In: *Current Anthropology* 38, 1997, pp. 327–351.

ways, that's what he calls an emotional regime. In which way societies speak or do not speak about certain emotions, which emotions politics demand and which they prohibit, by which rituals and practices emotions attain expression creates an emotional regime, which shapes the feelings of every particular subject.³⁹

In the case of the socialist idea of Heimat, the permanent and ubiquitous call for loving one's region and the GDR as well as the call for hating its enemies formed a normative framework; everybody was to feel this love and was to commit to it publicly by pronouncing it loudly. As William Reddy underlines, every political regime needs an emotional regime to underpin and legitimize its rules and dogmas.⁴⁰ However, not every emotional regime was as straightforward as the one in the GDR.

Children in the GDR were to be raised in hate, or in the words of young pioneers: „Our pioneers are to be educated to hate these beasts in human form.“⁴¹ This call from 1961 addressed the youth and named the opponents only generally as “monopolists” and “arsonists” but clearly marked them as others and dehumanized those who lived in capitalist foreign countries and purportedly worked there to bring a third world war upon humanity. Therefore, the emotional regime of love for one's Heimat is not only based on emotional connections of subjects to their *Lebenswelt*, it also addresses hate and fear and mobilizes hate and fear. Fearing one's enemy was intended to make the people recognize the political elite as well as the political order as a stronghold of peace. The love of one's Heimat was presented clearly as a goal; the regime wanted the East German youth to recognize previous accomplishments and, as a consequence, get ready to defend socialist achievements. As a result, Heimat became an “*element of socialist consciousness*”.⁴²

Demanding love of the GDR was necessitated by the brevity of its history: The political leaders constantly emphasized how much the older generations had done for the younger ones – and established love for Heimat and fatherland based on the efforts to shepherd every subject.⁴³ This regime was based on a very simple conclusion: Those who know their Heimat, who above all recognize the achievements in building up socialism and thus recognize the benefits for themselves and others love their Heimat and are ready to shape and to create, but also to protect it.⁴⁴

39 Reddy, William M.: *The Navigation of Feeling. A Framework for the History of Emotions*. Cambridge 2001, pp. 122–130.

40 Reddy, W.: *Navigation*, p. 129, where he defines an emotional regime as: “*The set of normative emotions and the official rituals, practices, and emotives that express and inculcate them; a necessary underpinning of any stable political regime.*”

41 Aufruf zum IV. Pioniertreffen 1961, zentrales Pionierlager “Wilhelm Florin”: “*Unsere Pioniere sind zum Haß gegen diese Scheusale in Menschengestalt zu erziehen.*” Quotation taken from: Wierling, Dorothee: *Geboren im Jahr Eins*. Der Jahrgang 1949 in der DDR. Versuch einer Kollektivbiographie. Berlin 2002, p. 173.

42 Scholz, G.: *Erziehung*, p. 16.

43 For the history of love in political discourse see: Lüdtke, Alf: *Love of State – Affection for Authority*. Politics of Mass Participation. In: *New Dangerous Liaisons. Discourses on Europe and Love in the Twentieth Century*. Edd. L. Passerini – L. Ellena – A. C. T. Geppert. New York – Oxford 2010, pp. 58–74.

44 Mohr, H. – Hühns, E.: *Heimatgeschichte*, p. 14: “*Die Erziehung zur Heimatliebe durch das bewußt gewordene Erlebnis unserer revolutionären Umgestaltungen, die auf den Kämpfen der werktätigen Bevölkerung, insbesondere der*

Hence, the patriotic education, especially of children, was of particular importance in the early years.⁴⁵ In the GDR, the adolescents were to be educated to socialist patriotism with a “*rhetoric of love*”.⁴⁶ In return, they should love everything, their parents, their teachers, their party comrades, but above all the “workers` and peasants` state” which guarantees a peaceful and secure future to them. These educational efforts began in kindergartens and tried nothing less than to reconfigure traditional family relationships. A loving affection was no longer intended blossom solely for the biological family but also meant for the working class and the community of those living in the GDR. A symbolic representation emerged, which gathered the people like a big family, the state treated its citizens like parents (would) treat their children. Thus, the social sub-areas were integrated and affiliations on all levels were initiated and demanded. Particular mass organizations deepened and stabilized this hierarchical system; the Young Pioneers symbolized the siblings, the party acted like the caring father. The state thereby infantilized not only the children but also the adults. All citizens were called upon to fight, to fulfill their duties and to appreciate the anti-fascist struggle and the subsequent continuation of the policy of the SED.⁴⁷

Little changed in this line of argument in the following thirty years of the GDR. In 1988 the love of the Heimat – now equated with the love of the fatherland – was elevated to an essential goal of communist education and within it the willingness to cooperate with state power as well as to lead a moral life was established.⁴⁸ Scholz and his co-authors particularly emphasized the GDR’s policy of peace. The leading party had preserved peace and had thus prevented a third, atomic world war (“Europe must not become a Euroshima”⁴⁹). However, the indicators of showing this love changed. Scholz and others demanded that everybody should show his love for Heimat and fatherland in his deeds: “The unity of word and deed creates love for home and for the fatherland.”⁵⁰ Learning and participation in combat related to one another, from the “deep insight” into the past, present and future an attitude and readiness to act had to be derived, although it remains unclear how this prophetic vision was to be performed.

Arbeiterklasse beruhen, ist ein wichtiger Bestandteil der sozialistischen Erziehung unserer Menschen. Wir vertiefen durch sie die Liebe zu unserem Vaterland, der Deutschen Demokratischen Republik, dem ersten Arbeiter-und-Bauer-Staat in der deutschen Geschichte. Unsere Heimat bedarf des Schutzes und der Verteidigung gegen ihre Feinde, die Imperialisten und Militaristen, besonders in Westdeutschland. Sie bedarf auch der Pflege und Gestaltung durch die ständige Arbeit aller ihrer Bewohner. Besonders aber muß unsere Jugend dazu angehalten und erzogen werden.“

45 See: Wierling, D.: *Geboren im Jahr Eins*, pp. 103–117; Wierling, D.: *Über die Liebe zum Staat – der Fall der DDR*. In: *Historische Anthropologie* 8, 2000, pp. 236–263; Brauer, Juliane: “*Mit neuem Fühlen und neuem Geist*“. Heimatliebe und Patriotismus in Kinder- und Jugendliedern der frühen DDR. In: *Das Imaginäre des Kalten Krieges. Beiträge zu einer Kulturgeschichte des Ost-West-Konfliktes in Europa*. Hg. von M. Eugster. Essen 2015, pp. 163–186; Brauer, Juliane: *Zeitgeföhle*. Wie die DDR ihre Zukunft besang. Eine Emotionsgeschichte. Bielefeld 2020.

46 Wierling, D.: *Geboren im Jahr Eins*, p. 103

47 Ibid, pp. 109–112.

48 Scholz, G: *Erziehung*.

49 Ibid, p. 18.

50 Ibid, p. 10: “*Durch Einheit von Wort und Tat entsteht Liebe zur Heimat und zum Vaterland.*“

Emotions in Practice

However, it is more than questionable that the emotional regime of love for Heimat was successful and that this love took possession of everyone. The diverse forms of emotional mobilisation do not necessarily lead to the intended result, but are rather precarious and contingent: Monique Scheer therefore urges us to bear in mind when studying emotional mobilisations “that such structures are always in motion, that they are confirmed in everyday acts of production and challenged in deviant practices of undoing”.⁵¹ Therefore, it is necessary to ask whether and how love for Heimat was expressed in the routines of the *every-day*, in which practices this love was not only discursively confessed, but possibly also mobilised differently and thus anchored in the *Lebenswelt*. Now, I could enumerate a multitude of emotional practices that consolidate social relations and bind ideas of community to the local space: Celebrating festivals, sports competitions, hiking or eating. But I cannot consider all of them here. Therefore, I look at one practice, demonstrating. By doing so, I will give some clues to the potential of mobilisation by the emotional regime. This practice was chosen because the state tried to mobilise the people all the time to demonstrate and to express emotions at this instance.⁵² Demonstrations were used to anchor the love in the *Lebenswelt* and social actions.

The regime – here in the sense of state power – arranged numerous rituals for the masses in which the confession of love was central: flag roll calls, youth dedications and political demonstrations served to move people to love the state in the sense of the sentimental norm. People marched through the streets, sometimes more, sometimes less explicitly proclaiming love for their Heimat.

In Monique Scheer’s sense, the various forms of demonstration in the GDR can therefore be understood as emotional practices of mobilisation. At demonstrations the participants were supposed to express their love for their Heimat: In the literal sense, they set themselves in motion for Heimat. In addition, demonstrating can be seen as a communicating emotional practice, as an established act of reassurance about shared feelings and emotions of belonging.⁵³ In this sense, people in the GDR joined numerous mass events – of course, participation in these demonstrations was to a certain extent forced and voluntary at the same time, the political leadership demanded participation and rewarded consent, but the historical actors came to terms with these conditions and participated without explicit coercion.⁵⁴

51 Scheer, Monique: *Emotionspraktiken*. Wie man über das Tun an die Gefühle herankommt. In: Emotional Turn?! Europäisch ethnologische Zugänge zu Gefühlen & Gefühlswelten. Beiträge der 27. Österreichischen Volkskundetagung in Dornbirn vom 29. Mai–1. Juni 2013 (Buchreihe der Österreichischen Zeitschrift für Volkskunde, Neue Serie, Bd. 27). Hg. von M. Beitz et I. Schneider. Wien 2016, p. 34.

52 Scheer, Monique: *Are Emotions a Kind of Practice (and is that what makes them have a History)?* A Bourdieuan approach to understanding Emotion. In: *History and Theory* 51, 2012, pp. 193–220; Scheer, Monique: *Emotion als kulturelle Praxis*. In: *Emotionen*. Ein interdisziplinäres Handbuch. Hg. von H. Kappelhof. Berlin 2019, pp. 352–362; Scheer, M.: *Emotionspraktiken*, pp. 15–36.

53 Bareither, Christoph: *Wir-Gefühle: Vergemeinschaftende Emotionspraktiken in Populärkulturen*. In: *Bricolage* 10 (2019), pp. 37–50.

54 Lindenberger, Thomas.: *Einführung*. In: *Freiwilligkeit im (Post)Sozialismus* (Themenheft von Totalitarismus und Demokratie, Bd. 17). Hg. von Th. Lindenberger. Göttingen 2020, p. 153.

Furthermore, the theoretical approaches of Scheer and Reddy argue that speaking and acting already influence or constitute feelings. Therefore, the presupposition that practices and speech acts produce emotions guides the analysis of practices. This does not mean that a claimed confession has been fully congruent with the norm. The actors, however, have arranged their respective emotions by participating in the different emotional practices. If one approaches everyday historical sources from this perspective, initial descriptions of emotions and their practical production can be worked out.

For example, the “working population” was regularly called upon to make political statements. These are documented, among other things, in the diaries of the brigades: These collectively written self-testimonies reveal above all the cultural activities of the labour brigades. They are at the same time a medium of staging in the competition for the title “Collective of Socialist Work” as well as a medium of remembrance for communal activities. In particular, the various celebrations and excursions are given a lot of space and contributed to the fact that the brigade as well as the diaries had an equally community-building effect.⁵⁵ The brigade activities always oscillated between duty and pleasure.⁵⁶

The brigade “VIIth Party Congress of the SED”, working in the Dresden aircraft hangar, regularly took part in demonstrations at February, 13th in Dresden. On these occasions, on the one hand, “the senseless destruction of our city by Anglo-American terror bombers was commemorated”, but on the other hand, they also served as a commitment to the socialist state and its “peace policy”.⁵⁷ In the brigade’s diary for 1984 there is a whole page on the peace rally. A call from the newspaper names the event, the place and the political significance of the demonstrations. A handwritten addition highlights the participation of the brigade.⁵⁸ Below a picture of the ruins of the Frauenkirche. This picture was arranged with a drawing showing a Soviet and a NVA soldier guarding a border tree behind which “NATO rockets” are going off. The drawing is signed with the sentence: “*Brothers in arms stand on guard for peace, because Europe must not become Euroshima!*”⁵⁹

This image arrangement affirms the political narratives of loving Heimat and confessing it’s own perspective on the official peace policy. The brigade members use the already familiar images of the nuclear threat with exactly the same wording when they admonish that Europe must not become a “Euroshima”. In accordance with the diction of the emotional regime, feelings are expressed here – which, however, was inevitable in

55 Lühr, Merve: “*Da musste Brigadebuch geführt werden*”. Kollektive Tagebücher als Erinnerungsobjekt und archivalische Quelle. In: *Volkskunde in Sachsen* 28, 2016, pp. 153–166; Lühr, Merve: *Tagebuch schreiben im Kollektiv*. Brigadetagebücher in der DDR zwischen Ideologie und Alltagspraxis. In: *Selbstreflexionen und Weltdeutungen. Tagebücher in der Geschichte und der Geschichtsschreibung des 20. Jahrhunderts* (Geschichte der Gegenwart, Bd. 10). Hg. von J. Steuer, et R. Graf. Göttingen 2015, pp. 163–185.

56 Reichel, Thomas.: *Sozialistisch arbeiten, lernen, leben*. Die Brigadebewegung in der DDR. Köln – Weimar – Wien 2011.

57 Institut für Sächsische Geschichte und Volkskunde, Lebensgeschichtliches Archiv für Sachsen, Brigadetagebuch der Brigade VII. Parteitag der SED, Flugzeugwerft Dresden, Tagebuch 1984, Bl. 24.

58 Ibid.

59 Ibid.

view of the form, since the editors used the official newspaper material here. In a similar form, the brigade mentioned that they had taken part in rallies on the day of the destruction of Dresden in 1985, 1986 and 1987; whole pages were always made up for this in the corresponding diaries.⁶⁰

At the same time, they condensed this GDR self-image in commemoration of the bombing of Dresden and linked it to the “myth of Dresden”.⁶¹ At these demonstrations, Dresdeners expressed their solidarity with their city, their mourning over the destruction in the last months of the war as well as their defensive stance against any “imperialist aggression”. These demonstrations formed the Dresdeners into a community of mourning and suffering. This self-perception is made clear by a handwritten addition to the commemoration of 13 February 1985: between pictures of the ‘old Dresden’ a brigade member wrote the following sentences: “*Forty years ago Dresden was devastated in the hours of one night. Despite the intervening decades, this memory has lost none of its agonising poignancy.*”⁶²

Alongside this, in 1985, is an additional report from another event to mark the 40th anniversary of the bombing. The brigade attended a lecture together, which on the one hand recapitulated the events, and on the other told of the reconstruction on the basis of individual details of the city’s history. The focus was on the story of the “golden town hall man” and the “Trümmerfrau”, both of whom recalled “*those who brought the town back to life and to whom we owe the fact that it could become Heimat to us all*”.⁶³ This handwritten report, again illustrated with two pictures of the town hall and the *Trümmerfrau*, represents the effect of the emotional regime in an almost exemplary way: Knowing one’s Heimat was supposed to produce love for Heimat; emotional practices such as participating together in demonstrations and information events served to mobilise feelings and internalise emotional knowledge. The final confession to Heimat here underlines the effectiveness of the political demands to take a stand and express love of Heimat even in these semiofficial reports. The brigade diaries thus prove the influence of emotional demands on the practices of the actors and document a routinised participation in political demonstrations. The brigade thus strengthened their emotional ties to the ideas of their Heimat. They linked historical knowledge with contemporary community ideas, mourned the fate of their city, and at the same time looked courageously and resolutely to the future. In this way, the effects of the emotional regime on everyday practice seem obvious.

60 Institut für Sächsische Geschichte und Volkskunde, Lebensgeschichtliches Archiv für Sachsen, Brigadetagebuch der Brigade VII. Parteitag der SED, Flugzeugwerft Dresden, Tagebuch 1985, Bl. 47 u. 48; Tagebuch 1986, Bl. 27, Tagebuch 1987, Bl. 32.

61 Neutzner, Matthias: *Vom Anklagen zum Erinnern*. Die Erzählung vom 13. Februar. In: Das rote Leuchten. Dresden und der Bombenkrieg. Hg. von O. Reinhard – G. Bergander. Dresden 2005, pp. 128–163; *Mythos Dresden*. Faszination und Verklärung einer Stadt. Dresden 2005, pp. 38–48.

62 Institut für Sächsische Geschichte und Volkskunde, Lebensgeschichtliches Archiv für Sachsen, Brigadetagebuch der Brigade VII. Parteitag der SED, Flugzeugwerft Dresden, Tagebuch 1985, Bl. 48.

63 Institut für Sächsische Geschichte und Volkskunde, Lebensgeschichtliches Archiv für Sachsen, Brigadetagebuch der Brigade VII. Parteitag der SED, Flugzeugwerft Dresden, Tagebuch 1985, Bl. 60.

However, the interpretation of these statements as expressions of emotion is not without problems. According to Reddy's understanding of emotives, the expression of emotions also changes the perception and meaning of the emotion for the subject. Therefore, if historical actors profess to love their Heimat, this can certainly be understood as an emotive. Especially the ubiquitous, routinised declarations of love in the socialist state on holidays and socialist high masses, as well as in everyday school life and during work routines, could in turn have had their effect and configured people's love relationship to the Heimat. Those who constantly express their love for the Heimat could also have felt it. At the same time, these emotive acts were politically predetermined – it was highly in keeping with the emotional regime to continually profess one's love. Thus, the confessions could also have been seen through as such and could not have led to conflicts in the subjective emotional navigation. For it was precisely the love of one's Heimat that could be directed at quite different objects – therein lay both the weakness and the strength of the political strategy. The socialist state leadership was obviously aware that it would not get the majority of the population to identify with their state if it forced them to make a direct commitment to the state. Therefore, it interposed the construction of the socialist Heimat. On the one hand, because Heimat, as a semantically and conceptually elastic construction, could conceptualise very different phenomena and thus a Marxist philosopher could have a very different idea than a nature observer or a museum employee. On the other hand, because constructions of Heimat in Germany have related nation and region since the end of the 19th century. The SED took up this tradition and continued it under socialist auspices. However, it can be assumed that the declarations of the aircraft maintenance brigade in Dresden of loving Heimat, for example, did not have to refer to the state, but were linked to the city. The individual relationship between the expression of emotion, the practice of emotion and the object can hardly be generalised. There were different ideas of what was understood and loved. These differences were not always expressed, but were accepted. The obvious commitment to the socialist order was sufficient for the party dictatorship's need for legitimacy.

Conclusion

In the post-war years, the GDR competed against the FRG for providing a new beginning in Nazi-Germany. By emphasizing and praising its democratic, antifascist and peaceful character, the GDR staged this goal permanently. The SED and its propaganda claimed superiority and victory for their project and their model of society. In the worldview of the SED, the people were liberated, empowered, and thus happier – the people only had to realize it. Therefore, socialist writers started to connect socialism with the traditional German concept of Heimat, which was derived from imperial politics and reutilized to combine regional awareness with national commitment. However, Heimat is itself blind for the concrete political system, it worked as a politicised concept in democratic, fascist and socialist state orders. Thus, the socialist formation of society, the GDR, was to become the Heimat of the people. The party claimed ubiquitously that only the GDR could

offer freedom, justice and democracy. If the people were to recognize these political achievements, if they saw the progress in society, they could feel nothing less than love for their state, their socialist nation, their Heimat.

Thus, the SED started a broad campaign to acknowledge the Heimat and to love the Heimat, which was even more important to them. An emotional regime grounded the theory of a socialist Heimat, where the people loved their state, their party and their neighbours. This emotional regime reached all institutions of socialist society, influenced the inhabitants from the very beginning of their lives. First in the kindergarten, later on in school and at work in state-owned companies, in the newspaper and on the streets, loving the GDR, loving one's Heimat was demanded. Moreover, after 1961 no one could flee from this permanent propaganda and the majority of the people experienced it from day to day up until the autumn of 1989.

Those, who lived in the GDR, acted with "self-will"⁶⁴ and found different and divergent ways to handle the every-day, something the wielders of political power, i.e. the party, tried to normalise.⁶⁵ This had its impact; some believed in the superiority of the system but others saw the gap between propaganda and the problems and challenges they meet every day, and some tried to shift their local community. They still called it their Heimat, but did not combine it with the belief in the unerring progress of socialism. Thus, Heimat became a special notion in the GDR with different, deviating aspects. Even if the political discourse did not change and Heimat depended officially on socialism until the end of the GDR, the acting individuals gave their activities their own meanings, had their own reasons and varied the theme permanently. The scope and dimensions of these changes and signifying practices are the purpose of further research to come.

Domov je tam, kde vládnu lidé! Idea socialistické vlasti a její emoční režim v NDR

V poválečných letech soupeřila Německá demokratická republika se Spolkovou republikou Německo o vybudování nového začátku pro postnacistické Německo. NDR proto zdůrazňovala svůj demokratický, antifašistický a mírumilovný charakter. Sjednocená socialistická strana Německa (SED) si skrze propagandu nárokovala morální převahu a vítězství pro svůj model společnosti. Socialističtí spisovatelé proto začali spojovat socialismus s tradičním německým konceptem „Heimat“, odvozeným z imperiální politiky a znovu využitým ke spojení regionálního povědomí se závazkem vůči národu. „Heimat“ je však sám o sobě neutrální koncept, který ale může být zpolitizován různými režimy: demokratickým, fašistickým i socialistickým. V NDR měl „Heimat“ pro lid představovat socialistickou formaci společnosti. Komunistická strana tvrdila, že svobodu, spravedlnost a demokracii může nabídnout pouze NDR a lidé k ní nemohli cítit nic jiného než lásku. Režim vytvořil emoční teorii socialistického „Heimatu“, v němž lidé milují svůj stát, svou stranu a své

64 Lingenger, Thomas: *Eigen-Sinn, Domination and No Resistance*. In: Docupedia Zeitgeschichte, 03.08.2015 https://docupedia.de/zg/Lindenger_eigensinn_v1_en_2015, cited 18.03.2021.

65 *Power and Society in the GDR, 1961–1979*. The Normalisation of Rules. Ed. M. Fulbrook. New York, Oxford 2009.

sousedy. Tento emoční náboj měl proniknout všechny instituce socialistické společnosti a působit na obyvatele od samého počátku jejich života. Nejprve ve školce, později ve škole a v práci ve státních podnicích, v novinách a na ulici se žádalo milovat NDR, milovat svůj „Heimat“. Po roce 1961 navíc před touto permanentní propagandou nemohl nikdo utéct a většina lidí ji zažívala každodenně až do podzimu 1989. Někteří věřili v nadřazenost socialistického systému, jiní ale viděli propast mezi propagandou a problémy, se kterými se každý den potýkali. Někteří se pokoušeli změnit svou místní komunitu. Stále používali pojem „Heimat“, ale nespojovali jej s vírou v neomylný pokrok socialismu. „Heimat“ se tak stal v NDR zvláštním pojmem s různými obsahy.



This work can be used in accordance with the Creative Commons BY-NC-ND 4.0 International license terms and conditions (<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/4.0/legalcode>). This does not apply to works or elements (such as image or photographs) that are used in the work under a contractual license or exception or limitation to relevant rights.