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PAYING THE PRICE OF GERMAN UNIFICATION: MÄNNER PLANEN, FRAUEN BADEN AUS

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Prior to the collapse of many an East European regime, the question as to whether socialism constituted a prerequisite for the institutionalization of feminism—or whether feminism would inevitably serve as the foundation for a truly socialist society—appeared to be about as unresolvable as the age-old debate over the historical precedence of the chicken versus the egg. Looming large in the feminism-versus-socialism debate is the strategic deliberation whether gender equality might best be secured on the basis of “emancipation from above,” or whether it ought to rely primarily on the process of “emancipation from below.” The history of the women’s movement in the Federal Republic prior to 1989 suggests that feminist consciousness comes more quickly to those who mobilize themselves. Experiences in the former GDR nonetheless indicate that real changes in policy occur more quickly when orchestrated from the top down. Paradoxically, women in the New Germany are about to witness significant roll-backs in their respective campaigns for *Gleichberechtigung*, rather than a logical fusion of the gains that have been secured on both sides of the border over the past forty years.

A. Demography and its Discontents

Assessments of demographic developments in the two German states have frequently been subject to qualification based on references to the so-called “missing generation” phenomenon, attributable to the population losses of two World Wars. The *Frauenüberschuß* in the East was further exacerbated by a greater proclivity on the part of men to make use of legal as well as illegal escape routes in order to seek a new life in the West (for example, 56% men: 44% women in 1989).¹ The changing of the political guard and commencement of a “long march through the institutions” by women was nevertheless much more restricted in the GDR, despite a faster rate of reproduction among the citizens at large.

By the 1980’s, the average *marrying age* for East German women was 22.5 years, 24.6 for men. Western women were more likely to enter into matrimony at 24.4 years, their male counterparts at age 27. Even more significant, however, is the difference in average *child-bearing ages* reflected in the two systems prior to the transformative events of 1989/90. In 1987, roughly 60% of all live births in the GDR were registered to women aged 25 or younger, 75% ascribed to those 27 or under; one-third of all births took place out of wedlock, resulting in 340,000 single mothers by 1989.² Excluding resident foreigners, the Federal Republic reported 31% of its new arrivals born to women aged 25 or less, rising to 49% among those 27 or younger. Hence, the average birthing-age fell between 21-23 in the East, between 27-30 in the West. Close to 90% of all GDR women capable of bearing children did so through the 1980’s, in sharp contrast to a fertility rate of roughly 65% in the FRG. Pre-unity surveys dating back two decades reveal that an overwhelming majority of GDR men *and* women consistently desired two children.

The jump into family life was one way of minimizing economic dependency and circumventing the chronic hous-

ing shortage, owing to special interest-free marriage loans that could be expunged according to the number of children one bore [*abkindern*]. The proviso that loans of 5,000 Marks were only accessible to those age 25 or younger contributed to a proliferation of “youth marriages,” which also accounted for an above average divorce rate. The number of divorces doubled between 1960 and 1985, two-thirds of which were filed by women. The rate of dissolutions peaked in 1986 when 137,208 marriages were countered by 52,439 divorces, over 38%; this compares with a rate under 28% in the West.³ By 1989 the marital loan had been raised to 7,000 Marks and the age-limit extended to 30; statistics suggest that there had already been a slight trend towards postponing childbirth. By mid-year 1991 the birth rate in the Five New States dropped 52%, owing largely to economic disruptions and insecurity.

Over 90% of all women aged 15 to 60 engaged in paid labor, compared to a figure of 55% among working-age females in the FRG. The chronic deficiencies of the planned economy posed special hardships for many single mothers forced to juggle the double burden of family and career, long deprived of numerous labor-saving devices routinely found in western households. Their day-to-day tribulations notwithstanding, an empirical comparison of the economic status and social-policy benefits accorded women in the two states prior to unification suggests that women in the now-defunct GDR stand to lose significantly more than their chains.

As manifested by the changing composition of the autumn 1989 demonstrations, East German women were consistently less enthusiastic about the idea of unification than men. Polls conducted under the auspices of the *Zentralinstitut für Jugendforschung* (ZIJ) determined that women accounted for one-third of those who regularly attended the candle-lit, silent marches in October-December 1989. Their banners called for free elections, the right to travel and reconstruction of the GDR in the mode of “socialism with a human face.” The period of January-March 1990 witnessed a shift in the tone and composition of the demonstrations; protesters engaged in rowdier calls for a “Germany united Fatherland,” accompanied by much flag-waving and chanting (often directed against “reformers”); during this phase the proportion of female marchers fell to less than one-fourth.⁴

Surveys executed after the breaching of the Wall produced even more compelling evidence along these lines. In late February/early March 1990, 80% of the women claimed to favor unity, compared to 88% of the men; by the end of April, the proportions had shifted to 80% among females and 92% among males. Of this group, 41% of the women were “strongly in favor of” unification, versus 58% of the men; among “workers,” strong support was voiced by 43% women but 61% men. One-fifth of the female sample overtly opposed unity, a position held by only 8% of their male counterparts. When questioned as to the most appropriate time-frame for forging the two systems, 43% men and 38% women cited the end of 1990, while the idea of delaying the process until after 1992 only appealed to 12% of the males but to 21% of the females.⁵

B. The Politics of Social Choice and Economic Autonomy

Although the GDR proved quite deficient with respect to the realization of democratic freedoms, it nonetheless afforded a *framework* for women’s rights as human rights, despite the non-feminist objectives of its policy-makers.

The driving force for the operationalization of women's rights in the GDR was ideological in theory, yet demographic and economic in praxis. Seeking to compensate for a scarcity of skilled labor, the state had to convince women, first, to enter the industrial labor force and, second, to have (more) children. Last but certainly not least, it had to motivate its skilled female workers to return to the paid labor market post-haste if not immediately post-partem.

Under capitalist democracy, equality of all kinds is contingent upon a broad, albeit abstract societal consensus regarding the inalienable nature of rights, blended with a measure of pragmatic, "rugged individualism." In the context of Marxism-Leninism, the gender question comprises but another manifestation of the class question.⁶ The constitutions of both German states guaranteed the equality of men and women, in addition to according special protection to marriages and families [two Articles in the FRG, nine separate Articles in the GDR]. The West German Basic Law relegated family life to the private realm, although politicians legislated the principle of the "housewife-marriage" in 1957, upheld until the courts proclaimed the division of household labor a matter of self-determination in 1977. The GDR stressed the "societal" dimension of family life, explicitly defining the rights and duties of both marital partners as well as those of their children.⁷

The most rapid, quantitative gains made by women occurred within the educational sector of the two Germanys. Advances in the East can be attributed to the ideological and demographic imperatives of the fifties, while educational inclusion in the West stemmed from the demand for "equal opportunity" and the need to "dare more democracy" voiced by protesters of the sixties. Statistically speaking, the GDR proved to be the more progressive of the two systems with regard to higher educational access for women. It surpassed the FRG in 1970, with female university enrollments falling just short of 50% by 1980. By 1988 the latter had yet to attain a level above 41%, despite the fact that females accounted for more than half of the *AbiturientInnen* constitutionally entitled to academic study.⁸ The Eastern state revised its provisions for young mothers in 1972, providing supplemental scholarship payments to women who gave birth during their years of university enrollment and ensuring adequate day care facilities. The tendency to avoid certain career fields persisted but remained more pronounced in the West.⁹ In many cases it was the GDR's industrial combines which reimposed restrictions on female entry into certain technical spheres.¹⁰ Socialist ideals took a back seat to the production imperatives of "the Plan," the key factor in GDR economic life.

Access to higher education is a necessary but not a sufficient condition for determining the levels of professional achievement open to women in a given system. The rhetoric of socialist equality notwithstanding, the "glass ceilings" found in the GDR were almost as impenetrable as those in the FRG, as reflected in the proportion of professional female academics and economic managers. In neither state did they succeed in transcending the 15% threshold at the highest levels.

Women earn less, live longer, and suffer the indignity of poverty in old age to a significantly greater degree than men. They accounted for 81% of all Federal Republicans over 65 forced to seek welfare benefits to supplement insufficient state pensions as of 1987. The legal retirement age for GDR-women was set at 60, 65 for men; to offset imbalances in earnings, authorities factored in the increases

women would have accrued by retiring five years later. Those who raised more than three children were entitled to pension bonuses at the rate of "three years' worth of earnings" per child. Yet inequities persisted in the East where women accounted for 74% of all retirees in 1989. That year 131 men and 103,000 women received the absolute minimum pension of *Ost-Mark* 330, with 423 men and 63,000 women receiving only 10 Marks more.¹¹

The imposition of Western health care regulations means that contraceptives will no longer be free for women in the East. A 1981 study by ZIJ researchers found that GDR citizens' first experience with sexual intercourse took place, on the average, at the age of 16 years, 9 months—auguring a dramatic rise in the number of unwanted teen pregnancies in the months ahead.¹² As of July 1990, the "birth benefit" paid to all women after delivery irrespective of income fell from *Ost-Mark* 1,000 to DM 150—in spite of the fact that salaries in the Five New *Länder* are only equivalent to 35-40% of West German earnings, prices are set at the 100% level, and rents have surged 50-500% since controls and subsidies were terminated on 1 October 1991.

The GDR's relatively generous provisions for maternity leave (6 weeks before, 20 weeks after delivery), subsidized child-care facilities (costing about \$10-\$20 a month, including hot meals), guaranteed return to their former jobs (or one equivalent in status, for up to three years after delivery)—these conditions freed women from the complicated professional and financial calculations dominating the parental decisions of their Western counterparts. As of 1981, Western mothers were only entitled to reentry/retraining courses if they could certify that "domestic duties" would not restrict their working-time to twenty hours per week. Seeking to encourage births, the CDU/CSU-FDP government created a "Mother and Child Foundation" in 1984 to aid financially needy women (and thus deter abortions). In 1986 it recognized the "pension rights" of housewives, with two ironic twists. First, mothers could only draw upon "baby-year" entitlements if they had contributed to the national insurance system for five years as paid laborers (or produced an equivalent number of children). Second, it initially excluded the 4.6 million women born after 31 December 1920, the *Trümmerfrauen* who bore and raised 11.2 million children during the same period they were digging the fledgling state out of the fascist rubble—the generation which included the mothers of Chancellor Kohl (born 1930), then-CDU chief Geissler (1930), and Labor Minister Blum (1935)!

In the former GDR, 84% of the children under 3 and 90% of those aged 3-5 found refuge in state-supported child care facilities in the East, many open 24 hours a day to accommodate shift-laborers.¹³ This contrasts with FRG figures of less than 60% among 3-5 year olds, and 12% under age 3 who were covered by such services; here the costs range from DM 250 to DM 1,500 per month. Out of the 600 child care centers that had been publicly subsidized in Berlin over the years, 30 were told to anticipate rent increases between 100 and 450%.¹⁴ The Berlin Senate sought to deal with its own budget crunch by eliminating 18,000 places in Berlin-East; another 20,000 toddlers reportedly stand on a waiting list for day care places in Berlin-West.¹⁵

Automatic post-partem leave has been reduced from 20 to 8 weeks. Indeed, the specific features of the "educational year" [*Erziehungsjahr*] in the FRG have thus far served as a disincentive for men to take advantage of parental leave. The program allocates a mere DM 600 per month as salary

replacement, no adequate match for the higher wages generally drawn by men. The Federal government moved to extend payments up to 18 months in July, later to 24 months, with job-return guaranteed beyond one year for women. The monthly "paid house-cleaning day" will be retained through December 1991—for Eastern women only. For the next decade, the status of women in the new Germany will fall under the ruling "more is less"; or, in the proverbial wisdom of one Hamburg feminist, "Männer planen, Frauen baden aus."

Even more hair-raising is the probable outcome of the abortion battle, under the rubric of §218. Rooted in the Criminal Code of 1871, FRG rulings specifically outlaw abortion on a trimester basis. To avoid prosecution, a woman must seek doctor certification that she falls under one of four "indicators" [medical, eugenic/fetal deformity, criminal/rape or incest, or extreme socio-economic hardship]. GDR statutes introduced in 1972 guarantee abortion upon demand (without cost) during the first three months, and in consultation with a physician during subsequent stages.¹⁶

Given its highly controversial nature, the regulation of abortion was intentionally excluded from the State Treaty of June 1990 and the Unity Treaty of September 1990. In lieu of legal certainty, women have been dealt a lousy political compromise—the application of both laws through December 1992, based on the "operative site" principle (rather than the more restrictive "residency" principle originally pursued by conservatives). The untenable consequences of compromise have already become self-evident in the case of "Kathrin K.," as well as in the follow-ups to the 1987 Memminger decision.¹⁷

A 1990 *Spiegel* survey attests to a largely "pro-choice" orientation among the German publics at large. In the FRG, 59% of all respondents thought that abortion "should remain unpunishable" or at least be permitted through the first three months, positions shared by 68% of the GDR sample. A majority of self-proclaimed conservatives on both sides supported choice, 54% and 59% respectively; legalization is favored 71% and 79% among those aged 18-29.¹⁸ By mid-1991, the Bonn government had financed 49 church-linked and 20 public gynocological "counseling centers" in the East. Several centers in the new state of Saxony are under Catholic direction, a faith professed by less than 3% of its residents.¹⁹

The introduction of the "social and currency union" [*Währungsunion*] on 1 July 1990 fell far short of its name. The arrival of the D-Mark quickly filled the GDR store shelves with lots of Western goods at inflated prices but brought little by way of a social-service infrastructure. That arrival had to wait out two more elections (14 October and 2 December) before new administrative agencies could be erected. The already decrepid distribution system collapsed during the interim period, resulting in "a command economy without commandos"—not unlike the collapse of the rationing system precipitated by Hitler's suicide in 1945. East European export contracts (the mainstay of GDR production) were instantly nullified, since established trading partners had no hard currency at *their* disposal. Old delivery systems lost their subsidies before they had a chance to generate capital reserves; without liquidity, company managers could not pay salaries, resulting in the first wave of unemployment.

Throughout the eighties the percentage of unemployed women with certified vocational training consistently ex-

ceeded that of men; females currently comprise two-thirds of those unable to find apprenticeships in the West, as well as 1.4 of the 2.3 million welfare-benefit recipients. By August 1991 "official" unemployment in the East stood at 14.5% for women, 9.8% for men, although females accounted for 58.5% of the truly jobless. Polled as to whether women should gradually withdraw from the labor market once New German men begin earning enough to support a family, 76% of the Eastern women rejected the idea, backed by 69% of their male compatriots.²⁰ It is true that most families required two salaries in order to maintain higher standards of living (though the cost of rent, electricity, and day care did not exceed 15-25% of most average paychecks). Yet most women surveyed maintain that they sought paid employment because work itself was a valued activity in the socialist state, which granted them a measure of economic independence unknown to most women in the Western state.

The status of working women prior to unity was outlined in a preliminary investigation commissioned under Eva Kunz, then Metropolitan Officer for Women's Affairs [*Frauenbeauftragte*] in East Berlin.²¹ According to the report drafted by Schenk, 79% of the Eastern women between the ages of 15-65 held permanent jobs, compared to 66% in Berlin-West; in absolute terms, working women outnumbered men between the ages of 25-45. Among gainfully employed females, 19% worked part-time, contributing to a GDR total of 27%, in contrast to 41% engaged in part-time jobs in the FRG. Some 57% found work in the service industries and social policy sectors, added to 20% active in light industry, the chemical, electronic and food-processing industries. Many labored in positions well beneath their level of formal qualification, although 90% were occupationally certified. By 1989, a reported 35% occupied "management" positions, most of which were concentrated at lower or middle levels, in local rather than in central administration.

Generally speaking, female income differentials averaged about one-fourth less, or M345 higher for men, owing in part to concentration in low-wage jobs. Compared to a 76% share in the East, female take-home pay in the West equals about 61% of the male industrial wage, 59% in the service sector.²² "Equal pay for equal work" is undermined by de facto exclusion from higher paid occupations. Out of 300 *Fachberufen*, women had been advised not to pursue 30 occupations on medical grounds, although real opportunities existed in only 122 fields; 60% of the female apprentices were concentrated in 10 "typically female" job categories. In the Federal Republic, roughly 90% of all women in industrial production have been classified as un- or semi-skilled laborers; in the GDR, 60% of all such work is performed by women.²³

By September 1990 women accounted for 55% of the unemployed in Berlin-East, of which 14% were single mothers (largely under 25) with dependent children. Concentrated in 6 out of 41 occupational fields (organizational, administrative, clerical, social work/educational jobs, social/natural sciences, and retail), women comprised two-thirds of all newly unemployed workers in these sectors, yet only one-third of those who were channeled into new jobs through the public labor offices were female.²⁴ Other "pink-collar" professions, e.g., the medical services, have been decimated by a lack of public capital. Traditional concentrations in the food-processing, shoe and textile industries face extinction for lack of international competi-

tiveness. West-law also prohibits night-work for women, eliminating female apprenticeships in those areas where rotating shifts might be expected. Last but not least, women with maximum academic qualifications have been rendered a more endangered species, thanks to Bonn's decision to "purge" the research and educational establishments of "politically undesirables" left over from the old system.

Schenk concludes with a long list of fields where women might seek to carve out new professional niches for themselves, ranging from environmental protection, to communications and marketing, to urban renewal. The dilemma is that these areas are now subject to the supervision/investment proclivities of West German men. Old patterns have already resurfaced as regards "the new professions"—Eastern German males are preferentially admitted to career programs for finance and insurance.

C. Frauenpolitik, wohin? Prospects for Political Mobilization

In many respects, there had been no "need" for an autonomous feminist movement in the GDR—compared to the United States, for example—insofar as women and their children were never in danger of falling below an existential minimum. As writer Daniela Dahn observed, however,

the autocracy of the former, male-dominated leadership ruined the GDR. All important decisions regarding politics, economics, the courts, the army, and the state security were made by men. At the other end of the ladder, where their miscalculations manifested themselves in the food supply, the service sector and the infrastructure, women had to cope.²⁵

On the surface, a comparison of "representative" institutions prior to the free elections of March 1990 suggests that the Eastern state may have been the more "German Democratic Republic." The proportion of female delegates to the GDR *Volkskammer* rose from 25% to 32% between 1960 and 1988; the figures for the *Bundestag* were 9% and 15% for 1960 and 1989, respectively. Geisler ascribes shares of 25% and 41% to the GDR at the level of the *Bezirke/Landtage*, compared to 7% and 18% of the mandates held by women in equivalent FRG bodies (Kolinsky challenges the latter, reporting that the female share of Western state-assembly seats ranged from 10-30% in 1989).²⁶ It is clear from these figures that female representation is always greater, the "closer to home" the institution tends to be located.

In fact, not a single woman ever served as a voting member of the SED's ruling *Politbüro* throughout the entire history of the GDR. Its two "candidate" members (Margarete Müller and Ingeburg Lange, appointed in 1963 and 1973) were never promoted. Nor were there any women to be found in the Presidium of the Council of Ministers, the highest organ of state. Margot Honecker—not very affectionately known as the "purple dragon" because of her blue hair rinse—was the sole female minister (responsible for *Volksbildung* since 1963) at the time of the regime's 1989 collapse. Only four others have ever enjoyed equivalent rank, compared to the eight female Cabinet members who occupied posts in the *Bundesregierung* prior to the first all-German elections of 1990.

The founding members of the key opposition groups included many prominent female dissidents, some for-

merly victimized by the *Stasi*. Women occupied seats at the local and national Round Tables, while Tatjana Böhme (UFV) served as a Minister without portfolio in the transitional Modrow government. The first signs of a representational "roll-back" emerged immediately after the 18 March elections. Having been virtually guaranteed one-third of the parliamentary seats under the old system, women accounted for only one-fifth of the delegates to the first democratically elected *Volkskammer*—and only one-sixth of the leading party's caucus. Neither the Liberals, the Farmers' Party nor the DSU counted any women among their mandated ranks. While the old chamber was little more than a rubber stamp for the designs of the *Politbüro*, it is also true that in politics the symbolic is often as important as the real.

The current Kohl government boasts of the largest number of female Ministers in postwar German history. Female does not translate into feminist, however. The Chancellor has resorted to the age-old strategy of divide-and-conquer, by chopping up the former Ministry of Youth, Family, Women and Health into three new components: Health (Gerda Hasselfeldt), Family and Elderly (Hannelore Roensch), Women and Youth (Angela Merkel, X-GDR). Overlapping competencies make it clear that the new ministers are "für alles ein bißchen zuständig, aber nur selten federführend verantwortlich."²⁷ Day care matters have been delegated to the Women's Ministry, since it is "obviously" this half of the species which bears primary responsibility for such—even if "Women" and "Family" are no longer administratively linked. No longer defined as a "women's" question, abortion will be regulated by the Minister of Family, and ultimately by the Ministry of Justice. The redistribution of functions is "inconsequential," insofar as all three *Frau-Ministerinnen* are active opponents of choice, and two even hope to tighten §218 provisions.²⁸

Immediately subsequent to the first all-German elections, a CDU-CSU/FDP Task Force on "Women and Family" estimated that in order to secure economic opportunities for women, the federal budget would have to include, inter alia: DM 3 billion for supplementary day care places and educational aids; DM 2.2 billion for educational facilities; and DM 900 million to provide "the Pill" without cost via the health insurance system. These projections coincided with a major study released by the International Monetary Fund, concluding that the Federal Republic will have to generate over DM 1,700 BILLION in capital stock over the next ten years in order to raise levels of industrial productivity in the East to their Western equivalents.²⁹

Bonn is currently pouring about DM 150 billion (\$100 billion) per annum into the Five New States—known as the FOB, or "Barrel without a Bottom"—merely to secure existing pensions, health-care, unemployment compensation, and to underwrite communal administration. The FRG has already delivered DM 33 billion intended to stabilize the rapidly deteriorating economy of the Soviet Union, and has made good on its pledge of nearly DM 18 billion (\$11 billion) to the US to cover its "share" of the Gulf-War bill. The process of consensus-building among pro-women activists will not come easily in the face of fierce competition for resources.

D. The Perils of Mythologizing versus Avenues for Social Change

It is not the intention of this author to glorify the asymmetries of the GDR past, nor to confuse quantity with

quality. Schissler is correct in warning us not to elevate the GDR's own rhetoric of *Gleichberechtigung* to the level of political myth, when the more compelling case for gender equality can and should be made on the basis of the high-quality, free-democratic Scandinavian examples.³⁰ Recurrent eulogies to the so-called *soziale Errungenschaften* of the German Demolished Republic are nonetheless justified in one essential point: *Codified rights* can be upheld in a court of law; theories about how the free market will "eventually" make everything better for women cannot. Nor can one effectively critique the quality of services essential for gender equality until those services have been established as legal democratic entitlements.

By the late 1980's the major parties had been pressured into adopting their own models for *Quotierung* under electoral competition from the Greens. Noting the significance of symbolism in politics, the newly elected *Bundestag* boasts an all-time "high" of 20.5% female membership. A second vehicle force for change is working its way up from the *Länder* level, where two governments (viz., Schleswig-Holstein and Berlin) have thus far employed at least one quasi-*Feminat*. A third vehicle for advancing the political and professional fortunes of women rests with the more than 300 "equal opportunity" and "women's affairs" offices (*Gleichstellungsstellen* and *Frauenbeauftragte*) which have come into being since the early eighties. A fourth factor is rooted in generational change. In the first comparative survey of East/West youth attitudes conducted in June-July of 1990, 83.4% of all respondents (82.1% FRG, 84% GDR) cited "equal rights for women" as an inalienable [*unverzichtbare*] component of their understanding of democracy. Some 60% of the FRG group and 53% of the GDR sample rejected the tenet that "housework is actually a woman's matter."³¹

Last but not least, there is the "contagion effect" implicit in foreign role models, e.g., Norway and France. European Community statutes in matters of equal pay, comparable worth, and marital rape extend well beyond the requirements outlined in German law. Accelerated integration in "Europe '92" will impel a much more rigorous application of gender equality standards than has been witnessed in either Germany to date.

Unfortunately for the women of the New Germany, Chancellor Kohl turned out to be an inept student of capitalism. Industrialists do not invest on the basis of "love for the brothers and sisters" but rather on the basis of anticipated profit. The paradox of unification is that, while Germany has become bigger, it has not automatically become better. There is a lot more of Germany but a lot less of everything else to go around (e.g., jobs, apartments and parking places). Without question, the New Women of Germany will have to engage in a significant prodding among the many Old Men who need to catch up with them. Let us hope that these women-united quickly succeed in inscribing upon their common banner, *Lieber gleichberechtigt als später!*

Endnotes

¹Gunner Winkler, Hrsg., *Frauenreport '90*, Berlin: Verlag Die Wirtschaft, 1990, p. 32ff.

²*Ibid.*, p. 112.

³Hrsg., Staatliche Zentralverwaltung für Statistik, *Statistisches Taschenbuch der Deutschen Demokratischen Republik*, Berlin: Staatsverlag der Deutschen Demokratischen Republik, 1989, p. 147.

⁴The Central Institute for Youth Research in Leipzig was established in 1966, subordinate to the Office for Youth Questions under

the Council of Ministers. The October 1989 collapse of the Honecker regime allowed ZIJ pollsters to adopt the same standards of depoliticized, representative sampling routinely applied in Western studies. See Peter Förster and Günter Roski, *DDR zwischen Wende und Wahl. Meinungsforscher analysieren den Umbruch*, Berlin: LinksDruck Verlag, 1990, p. 161 ff.

⁵*Ibid.*, p. 54, p. 60, p. 65.

⁶The orthodox position was outlined in Friedrich Engel's *Ideology of the Family* as well as in the *Communist Manifesto* itself—the oppression of women would cease with the triumph of class consciousness and the socialization of the means of production (August Bebel provided some exceptions to this interpretation). For a comprehensive theoretical treatment, see Catherine A. MacKinnon, *Towards a Feminist Theory of the State*, Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1989.

⁷Article 38/4, for example, obliged both parents in equal measure to raise their children to be "healthy, happy in life, virtuous and broadly well-educated human beings and state-conscious citizens." See Gisela Helwig, *Frau und Familie in beiden deutschen Staaten*, Köln: Verlag Wissenschaft und Politik, 1982, p. 143 ff.

⁸Rainer Geissler, "Soziale Ungleichheiten zwischen Frauen und Männer—Erfolge und Hindernisse auf dem Weg zur Gleichstellung in den beiden deutschen Staaten," *Sozialwissenschaftliche Informationen*, 19 (1990), p. 183.

⁹In the FRG, 55% of all females enrolled in vocational training were concentrated in 10 occupations, as opposed to 37% of the males, according to 1988 figures. In 1987, about 60% of the young female apprentices in the East focused on 16 occupations, largely in the "service" fields. Figures stem from Geissler, op. cit., pp. 181-193.

¹⁰Managerial stonewalling recurred not only because of the relative financial costs connected with granting maternity leave, finding replacement workers, or providing on-site daycare, but also because of the unpredictable absences from work (i.e., paid leave to care for sick children, amounting to 1.5 million workdays per month in 1989). Motherhood at an early age proved quite beneficial to industry, however, insofar as women 30 and older brought greater maturity to the workforce and could be (more or less) counted upon to remain in lower-paid jobs, compensated by way of closer collegial ties, for the next twenty-five years. *Frauenreport '90*, op. cit., p. 82.

¹¹Geissler, op. cit., p. 186. Further, *Frauenreport '90*, op. cit., p. 171.

¹²Uta Schlegel, Hrsg., *Junge Frauen Heute. Wie sie sind—was sie wollen*, Leipzig: Verlag für die Frau, 1986, p. 69.

¹³In the *DDR-Hauptstadt* where 47% had at least one child, the figures were 83% and 96%, respectively. Sabine Schenk, *Gutachten: "Neue Chancen und Risiken für Frauenerwerbsarbeit auf dem Berliner Arbeitsmarkt in den '90er Jahren"*, Hrsg. Magistrat von Berlin, Bereich für Gleichstellungsfragen, Berlin, 1990, p. 2.

¹⁴Reported in *Der Spiegel*, Nr. 10, March 4, 1991, p. 99.

¹⁵"Familie: Grauer Markt," *Der Spiegel*, Nr. 16, April 15, 1991, pp. 76.

¹⁶P. Voss, "Einstellung zum Gesetz über die Schwangerschaftsunterbrechung," Hrsg. Zentralinstitut für Jugendforschung Leipzig, July 1972, p. 9ff.

¹⁷In the former case, a 22 year old (married) mother was searched and arrested on suspicion of abortion while crossing the border between Holland and the FRG. The young woman was subjected to a forced vaginal exam in a state hospital, becoming a *cause célèbre* when it was revealed that she had fled to the West from Jena in 1988—where the procedure is still legal. "Abtreibung—Zwangsuntersuchung an der Grenze," *Der Spiegel*, 45. Jg., Nr. 10, March 4, 1991.

The Memminger case involved the Bavarian government's decision to expropriate a doctor's private records containing the names of 500 women who had terminated pregnancies over a period of two decades. Their names were published (many were practicing Catholics), all were investigated, and 200 were criminally convicted based on a judge's refusal to accept their "hardship" certification. Most of the latter faced sentences of DM 900-1500 in fines or 30 days in prison and were subsequently registered in police computers as having criminal records. It was later reported that one of the judges involved had an adopted child, another had compelled his girlfriend to have an abortion during the period in question; neither was removed from the case based on conflict of interest. See "Magdalena wehrt sich, Memminger Hexenjagd geht weiter," *Emma*, Nr. 7, July 1990, pp. 4-5.

¹⁸Barbara Bertram, "Zurück an den Herd?" *Spiegel Spezial, Das Profil der Deutschen*, Nr. 1, 1991, pp. 62-66.

¹⁹The Family Ministry has refused to subsidize *Pro Familie* (the German "Planned Parenthood") which provides contraception and abortion information on 120 Western centers.

²⁰Förster and Roski, op. cit., p. 89.

²¹Compiled by Schenk, op. cit., the study focuses primarily on conditions in the Eastern metropole, drawing from data collected prior to the end of 1989.

²²Eva Kolinsky, *Women in West Germany*, Oxford/New York/Munich: Berg, St. Martin's Press, 1989, p. 186ff.

²³Geissler, op. cit., p. 185.

²⁴81% subsequently enrolled in short-term, 50% in more extensive continuing education courses usually running from 8 am to 5 pm—which means they remain dependent upon child care services. If there is any analogy to be drawn between their plight and that of countrywomen who resettled to the FRG prior to 1989, the prognosis is not a particularly rosy one. Those women found themselves unemployed for longer periods than most of their fellow-travelers, added to the fact that a higher percentage of women eventually resorted to jobs beneath their level of formal qualification. See Anne Köhler, "Ist die Übersiedlerwelle noch zu stoppen? Ursachen-Erfahrungen-Perspektiven," *Deutschland-Archiv*, 23. Jg., Nr. 3, March 1990, p. 428.

²⁵Daniela Dahn, presentation at the American Institute for Contemporary German Studies in Washington, D.C., April 16, 1990, pp. 3-4.

²⁶Eva Kolinsky, "Political Participation and Parliamentary Careers: Women's Quotas in West Germany," *West European Politics*, Vol. 14, Nr. 1, January 1991, pp. 56-71.

²⁷See "Ministerinnen: Ein Bißchen zuständig," *Der Spiegel*, Nr. 8, 1991, p. 70, p. 73.

²⁸Even more indicative of things-to-come was Kohl's appointment of Claudia Nolte, a practicing Catholic from Thuringen; the youngest Member of the Bundestag, Nolte (25) will head the parliamentary Task Force on Women and Youth. Maria Michalk, a fervent Catholic from Dresden's Sorbin community, has been named to head the CDU-caucus group deliberating this issue. Both women are being used by Conservatives to demonstrate that a "silent majority" in the East wants to terminate the "trimester" approach country-wide.

²⁹See Leslie Lipschits and Donald McDonald, eds., *German Unification—Economic Issues*, Occasional Paper 78, Washington, D.C.: The International Monetary Fund, 1990.

³⁰Hanna Schissler, commentary presented during the panel on "Unification and Implications for Gender Issues" at the Fifteenth Annual Meeting of the German Studies Association in Los Angeles, September 27-29, 1991.

³¹*Deutsche Schüler im Sommer 1990—Skeptische Demokraten auf dem Weg in ein vereintes Deutschland. Deutsch-deutsche Schülerbefragung 1990*, Hrsg. Deutsches Jugendinstitut e.V., DJI Arbeitspapier 3-019, Munich, 1990, p. 33ff.

AUSSICHTSREICHE RANDFIGUREN?

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Hier soll auf eine Publikation aufmerksam gemacht werden, die für all die aufschlußreich sein könnte, die sich für die Geschichte der DDR-Literatur, speziell die der schreibenden Frauen und deren Geschicke nach dem Zusammenbruch der DDR interessieren. In einem Buch mit dem anspielungsreichen Titel *Gute Nacht, du Schöne!* äußern sich zwölf Autorinnen aus den Neuen Bundesländern zwischen März 1990 und Januar 1991 über ihr Leben und Schreiben in Vergangenheit und Gegenwart. Seit Frühjahr vergangenen Jahres ist die Frage Mode geworden, ob es überhaupt so etwas wie DDR-Literatur gegeben habe. Darauf reagieren in dieser Publikation einige Betroffene unmittelbar, und sie finden, daß JA. Im übrigen veranschaulicht das schmale Bändchen auch, daß—und warum—diese Literatur nicht nach Art von Kartenhäusern in sich zusammenfiel wie der Staat, in dem sie existiert hatte.

Es war durchaus nicht selbstverständlich, daß sich 1990 ein Dutzend jüngerer und älterer Autorinnen zu einer publizistischen Unternehmung zusammenfanden, die eine bestimmte Gemeinschaftlichkeit ausdrückt. Auch Schriftstellerinnen waren von der Wucht und Geschwindigkeit überrascht, mit der sich die Veränderungen in der DDR vollzogen. Da jeder Tag neue unerwartete Wendungen brachte, mochte es heikel erscheinen, Tagesmeinungen zu fixieren und öffentlich zu machen. Im übrigen hatten sich die meisten dieser 12 Autorinnen früher publizistisch kaum betätigt. Die Idee der Herausgeberin Anna Mudry kam den Beteiligten dennoch gelegen; sie war angetan, die notwendige individuelle Selbstverständigung zu stimulieren. Den meisten schien zudem das vorgeschlagene kommunikative Schreibvorhaben, nämlich Zwiegespräche mündlicher oder schriftlicher Natur zu organisieren, attraktiv. Die Partnerinnen sollten sich nach eigener Wahl zusammmentun. Der Gedanke, das Projekt dialogisch anzulegen, wirkte auf einige beflügelnd. An Gerti Tetzner gewandt, beschreibt Brigitte Burmeister den Vorgang so:

Ich stecke in einem Chaos und warte beklommen darauf, mit welcher Krankheit mein Körper antworten wird auf das psychische Unvermögen, zu verarbeiten, was geschieht. Schreiben ist erfahrungsgemäß eine Hilfe, nur bin ich von mir aus kaum in der Lage, sie zu ergreifen. Deshalb sind äußere Anforderungen, wie dieser Briefwechsel, gut für mich. Ich könnte meinem wirren Geist nichts entlocken ohne die Annahme, jemand will mich hören, eben Du (36).

Und Gerti Tetzner begründet ihr Zutrauen zum Briefwechsel, weil Briefe "einander nicht ins Wort" fielen "wie Gesprächspartner" (37), und weil sie im Zeitalter von Anrufbeantwortern und Telefax "Reste einer Kultur des Überflusses" (36) darstellten. Im übrigen kommt die Briefform, auch wenn das Ganze im Hinblick auf Veröffentlichung inszeniert ist, dem Bedürfnis nach Spontaneität, Vorläufigkeit und Subjektivität entgegen. Soweit der Plan des Vorhabens.