

DEUTSCHE ÖKOLOGIE:

COMPARATIVE OBSERVATIONS ON THE EMERGENCE
AND EXPRESSION OF ENVIRONMENTAL CONSCIOUSNESS
IN WEST AND EAST GERMAN POETRY

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I Ecology and Literature

1.1 The Emergence of Public Debate on the Environment

Awareness of ecological problems is probably almost as old as man's detrimental influence on his environment.¹ The central principle of ecology, that of natural balance between the species, foreshadowed in the medieval conception of nature as the perfect ensemble of God's creation, led already in the eighteenth century to physico-theological concern for the protection of endangered plants and animals as indispensable parts of the divinely ordained whole. In 1868, Ernst Haeckel, the German popularizer of Darwin's theory of evolution, founded the discipline of *Oecologie*, defined as 'die Lehre vom Naturhaushalte', necessary for the understanding and control of change in the environment. Increasing industrialization was by then leading to scientific observation and chemical analysis of pollution, an early study of acid rain appearing as long ago as 1883.² Works of nineteenth-century literature reflecting nascent awareness of environmental problems include Thoreau's *Walden*,³ Samuel Butler's *Erewhon*,⁴ Ibsen's *An Enemy of the People*,⁵ and Raabe's 'Pfisters Mühle'.⁶

However, ecological concern acquired a new dimension after the Second World War. The destruction of Hiroshima revealed man's ability to change the environment on a scale hitherto unimagined. The gap now also widened between the science of ecology, bent on optimal management of the environment, and broader public concern, associated with a desire to turn away from industrialization and militarism, and adopt a gentler, less exploitative relationship towards nature. The West German environmental 'movement' was a phenomenon of the 1970s, a national response to growing international recognition that postwar industrial expansion was leading to a serious disturbance of equilibrium between

man and nature. Major theoretical contributions to the international debate on human ecology such as the works of Herbert Marcuse,⁷ Lewis Mumford,⁸ and Ernst Schumacher (*Small is Beautiful*)⁹ were available in German translation, and the biologist Rachel Carson's pioneering study of the effects of DDT and other chemicals used as pesticides in agriculture, *Silent Spring*, became a German as well as an English bestseller.¹⁰ The first economic recession in the Federal Republic in 1967 served as a warning of the dangers of reliance on economic growth. The MIT study *The Limits to Growth*, commissioned by the Club of Rome, which used computer simulation to assess the impact of variables on the future of mankind, and predicted a collapse of civilization if economic growth were to continue, stimulated intense debate in West Germany as elsewhere.¹¹ Finally, the oil crisis of 1973, when the OPEC countries raised prices and restricted output of crude oil, brought home to sceptics the practical limitations of Western economic strategy.

At the same time, signs of the impact of the economic miracle on the West German environment were becoming clearer: landscapes were being increasingly encroached on by road building and monotonous urbanization; rivers and lakes polluted by industrial waste, sewage and phosphates; certain species of plants and animals were discovered to be threatened with extinction; and in the 1980s ever increasing percentages of the German forests were diagnosed as dying from acid rain. In what seemed a relatively weak economic situation, with growing unemployment, West German governments hesitated to introduce stricter environmental legislation which might overburden industry. The threat to the environment was registered by local and national groups¹² and attracted increasing attention in the media.¹³ The gradual emergence of a popular Green ideology led to the founding of the Green Party, which won its first electoral successes in 1979. Though new environmental laws were passed in 1980, and ecological issues were displaced by the Peace Movement at the forefront of public consciousness, nuclear energy remained a sphere of public conflict for some years, and environmental concerns have been kept in the public eye by both local and international crises and campaigns. From the start the environmental movement of the 1970s embraced different groups, each with their own distinct political motivation and interests — managers and bureaucrats who established a profit-seeking eco-industrial lobby on the one extreme, and eco-freaks, either aspiring to complete self-sufficiency, or

motivated by escapism and anarchistic delight in the collapse of the establishment on the other. In the wake of the student movement many with left-wing views played an active part: the environmental situation was interpreted as symptomatic of a general political and socio-cultural crisis. Environmentalism became an ideology seeking to replace crude materialist utilitarianism with the sometimes anarchic, sometimes irrational, but nonetheless genuine search for an alternative way of life based on a reconciliation between man and nature.¹⁴

I.ii Environmental Literature and Ökolyrik

This environmental movement was reflected in West German literature, and, perhaps more surprisingly, particularly in poetry. Hans Christoph Buch writes in the introduction to a special number of the Berlin journal *Tintenfisch* entitled *Thema: Natur. Oder Warum ein Gespräch über Bäume heute kein Verbrechen mehr ist* of the rediscovery of nature by his generation: 'Die Wiederentdeckung der Natur, bis vor kurzem noch synonym mit Ausflüppen und großer Verweigerung, ist zum Schlüsselwort für die späten 70er Jahre geworden, so wie der Aufbruch in die Gesellschaft für die späten 60er.'¹⁵ By 'rediscovery' Buch means recognition of the value of the natural environment in the wake of the antinuclear demonstrations in Wyhl and Brokdorf, and the expression of this in verse and prose. Together with essays and short prose, he presents poems by some fifteen German writers, ranging from the hermetic Peter Huchel to the protest singer Walter Moßmann. The revival of public interest in nature poetry in the late 1970s that this heralded was largely a response to the new perception of the vulnerability of our environment. This is shown by a number of subsequent anthologies: Edgar Marsch's collection of twentieth-century German nature poems *Moderne deutsche Naturlyrik*¹⁶ contains a substantial afterword in which the importance of the ecological *Warngeicht*¹⁷ is stressed. Alexander von Bormann's thematically arranged cross-section of six centuries of nature poetry *Die Erde will ein freies Geleit*¹⁸ has, again, an afterword 'Vom Realismus der Naturlyrik', stressing the environmental dimension already present in the title. Von Bormann argues that the central role of nature poetry since the late eighteenth century has been to counter instrumental reason, and show how freedom can be achieved only through renunciation of our domination over nature and our fellow men. Finally, there is the specialist anthology of environmental poetry *Im Gewitter der Geraden*, published by

the professor of political science, expert on environmental legislation, writer on the politics of citizens' action groups and amateur poet and Germanist Peter Cornelius Mayer-Tasch.¹⁹

Despite the weakness of many well-meant environmental poems (including some in the Mayer-Tasch anthology), which lack argumentative conviction and appreciation of the wider issues raised as well as linguistic and poetic subtlety, despite the resulting scorn of critics for the genre²⁰ and a general reluctance by serious writers to have their work classified as *Umweltlyrik* or *Ökolyrik*,²¹ environmental literature and poetry in the broader sense are by no means necessarily trivial, and they are of particular interest to those concerned with the interface of contemporary politics and culture. *Ökolyrik*, defined by Maren-Grisebach as 'Beschreibung, Erlebnis und Innenschau von Natur [...] aber aufgehoben in einer die Naturzerstörung beklagenden oder anklagenden, kritischen Haltung',²² has indeed gradually become respectable subject matter for Germanists.²³ In addition to on-the-whole brief but informative and insightful articles by Mayer-Tasch,²⁴ the journalist Hubertus Knabe,²⁵ the poet Hans-Jürgen Heise²⁶ and the Germanist Susanne Mittag,²⁷ German environmental poetry is also discussed in the introduction and two contributions to Norbert Mecklenburg's *Naturlyrik und Gesellschaft*,²⁸ in papers devoted to West and East German poetry given at an American symposium and published in Reinhold Grimm's *Natur und Natürlichkeit*,²⁹ and in the final chapter of Jürgen Haupt's comprehensive book *Natur und Lyrik*.³⁰

Environmental poetry is more than a mere document of social and political culture. It goes beyond the narrowly mimetic depiction of landscapes, polemic trieness and subservience of art to political interest. Its roots lie in the poetry of physico-theology (Brookes, for instance), in nature poems implicitly or explicitly rejecting exploitation and subjugation of nature (for instance much Romantic verse), and in poems of all ages warning against war, violence and human hubris. Some of the best poems of the 1970s are *Ökolyrik* in this sense, blending description and protest with historical reflection and analysis, and fusing these with personal emotion, grappling with significant conflicts of interest and expressing them with precision and originality.

I.iii Two German Literatures?

It has generally been held that GDR writers lagged behind their West German counterparts in recognizing and criticizing environmental damage, and that this blindness towards environmental dangers, reflecting of course the political values and priorities of not only the SED, but also the majority of the population, constituted a significant difference between West and East German literatures. In a scathing commentary on Volker Braun's poem 'Durchgearbeitete Landschaft' written in 1971, Peter Rühnkorf wrote in 1975 that the first half of the poem reveals 'einen beinahe brutalistisch-conquistadorischen Impetus' unthinkable in the West:

So etwas ist neu für unsere Ohren und Augen und es will uns auch nur schwer in den Kopf. Wo wir für die Erhaltung arkadischer Naturzustände gern auf die Barrikaden gehen, entzündet sich der Enthusiasmus eines DDR-Kollegen gerade an so gewaltisamen Eingriffen, die ein lieblich-ungebildetes Idyll aus seiner Urschuld reißen. Wo Kolonisierung und Kultivation für uns fast wesensgleich geworden sind mit einer Verlustwirtschaft, die auf Deubel-komm-raus und Mensch-hau-ab drauflos dräniert, kriegen wir es hier mit einer Pioniermentalität zu tun, die über ein hübsches Pastorale wegschreitet als wäre es nur unwegsamer Dreck.³¹

The reasons for the persistence of such a mentality in the GDR while the environmental movement in the Federal Republic was in full swing have been seen as slower industrial development, in turn responsible for priority remaining with economic growth, the attempts of bureaucratic socialism to use satisfaction of the material needs of the population as a source of legitimization for the system, ideologically founded faith in technological advance, and ignorance of the economic costs of pollution. As Hans Magnus Enzensberger wrote in a critical article on political ecology in 1973, despite his acknowledgement of Marx's vision of a reconciliation of man and nature in the early *Economic and Philosophical Manuscripts*: 'Marxism [today] as a defensive mechanism, as a talisman against the demands of reality, as a collection of exorcisms — these are tendencies which we all have reasons to take note of and combat. The issue of ecology offers but one example.'³²

Awareness of ecological problems in the GDR was discouraged. Statistics were withheld, and if public distrust of nuclear power came late, it was partly because protests against nuclear power stations in the West had been consistently played down in the GDR media. But was there really such a great difference between the treatment of environmental issues in East and West German creative writing as this would

Wald, Bestand an Bäumen, zählbar,
Schonungen, Abholzung, Holz- und
Papierindustrie,
Mischwald ist am rentabelsten
[...]
Zivilisationslandschaft

Zaubervald Merlins
Einhorn (das Tier, das es nicht gibt)
das uns bevorsteht,
das wir nicht wollten
die vergessene Zukunft
(*Im Gewitter*, p. 78,
also *Die Erde will*, p. 323)

Nature's revenge on man for his abuse, implicit in the threat of the closing lines here, is a recurring theme in Eich's poems and radio plays in the 1950s. It reflects less any irrational belief in nature's actual ability to strike back, than man's ultimate vulnerability because of his dependence on nature for life.

Ingeborg Bachmann's comparable misgivings over the reckless exploitation of natural resources and the release of destructive energies by science and technology are expressed in 'Freies Geleit' (Aria II):

Die Erde will keinen Rauchpfliz tragen,
kein Geschlopf ausspeien vorm Himmel,
mit Regen und Zornesblitzen abschaffen
die unerhörten Stimmen des Verderbens.
[...]
Die Erde will ein freies Geleit ins All
jeden Tag aus der Nacht haben,
daß noch tausend und ein Morgen wird
von der alten Schönheit jungen Gnaden.
(*Die Erde will*, p. 417)

Von Bormann points to the pertinence of the phrase 'freies Geleit': like a prisoner who can dictate terms to his captors, nature holds our lives in its hands, and is in a position to demand safe conduct. This poem was written in 1957 — a year of atomic bomb tests which evoked a response in the GDR too.³⁴ In March 1958, the year of the 'Kampf dem Atomtod' campaign, motivated by dread of atomic destruction and fear of a resurgence of German militarism, Bachmann was one of the signatories, together with Eich, Wolfgang Weyrauch,³⁵ Hans Magnus Enzensberger, Peter Rühmkorf and others, of a statement in the Munich journal *Die Kultur* protesting against Adenauer's atomic policy. The straightforward but nonetheless moving poems of the less well-known Dagmar Nick

suggest, either in the 1970s, or before and since? Have the 'two literatures' here been significantly out of step? On the basis of examples from poetry anthologies published in the 1970s and 1980s,³³ I shall first examine the origins of ecological consciousness in West Germany, and sketch out subsequent trends. By then looking at parallels in East German poems over the past thirty years (taking into consideration the question to what extent ecological issues were publicly debated in the GDR, and commenting on the greater role poetry played in this process than in the West), it should be possible to draw conclusions as to the existence of an underlying identity of concern for the environment which may be characteristic of German culture in both East and West.

II West German Environmental Poetry

II.1 Environmental Issues in the Poems of the 1950s and 1960s

Although specific social and political issues are rarely treated in the poetry of the 1950s, poets such as Günter Eich and Ingeborg Bachmann express their sense of unease with social developments and their scepticism regarding the future in powerful apocalyptic images. Concern at the development of technology and the impact of industrialization on our lives blends here with misgivings over conventional rearmament, man's potential for self-destruction through nuclear weapons, suppression of the past and the giving away of chances to reform society. Eich's forebodings and sense of personal guilt find expression in poems from the volume *Botschaften des Regens* such as 'Im Sonnenlicht', in which he suggests that we shall be called to account for our actions, including the squandering of resources — a phrase which can be interpreted in ecological terms:

[...]
Was üppig sie [die Sonne] gab,
was wir genommen ohne Besinnen,
das unverlangte Geschenk, —
eines bestirzenden Tages
wird es zurückverlangt.
(*Die Erde will*, p. 416)

A similarly ominous poem expressing reservations about the bureaucratic management and commercial exploitation of nature, written also in the late 1940s or early 1950s, is 'Wald, Bestand an Bäumen, zählbar':

'Aufruf', 'Apokalypse' and 'Wir' (*Im Gewitter*, pp. 202, 228, 230), constitute a similarly impassioned plea for a change of direction:

[...]
Aus den verwaisten Atommehlern
wird sich Verwesung ergießen
über die Erde,
und die verküppelten Rosen
werden die Schöpfung verneinen.
Unüberwindliche Stille wird sein
auf dem Schlachtfeld Europa.
(*Im Gewitter*, p. 228)

However, the truly outstanding figure in German environmental poetry in the late 1950s and 1960s is Hans Magnus Enzensberger. Already before pioneering the politicization of literature in the later 1960s, he was at the forefront in Germany in ecological concern. Indeed, environmental issues are indissolubly linked with his interest in the Third World and global political problems. Few were so well informed and so perspicacious on the one hand, and so lucid and eloquent on the other. Enzensberger's poem 'fremder garten', published in *verteidigung der wölfe* in 1957, was ahead of its time in discussing chemicals in vegetables, oil slicks at sea, atmospheric pollution and the sinister silence of a poisoned environment:

es ist heiß, das gift kocht in den tonaten.
hinter den gärten rollen versäunte züge vorbei,
das verbotene schiff heult hinter den türmen.
[...]
die signale verdorren. das schiff speit öl in den haven
und wendet. ruß, ein fettes, rieselndes tuch
deckt den garten. mittag, und keine grille.
(*Im Gewitter*, p. 66,
also *Die Erde will*, pp. 295f.)

Another poem in the same volume, 'aussicht auf amortisation',³⁶ is a vehement satire on progress: 'Fortschritt' is identified with frenzied demolition and reconstruction in cities, computers and cybernetics, atmospheric pollution and superfluous affluence, and its logical conclusion is exposed as preparation for another war. Enzensberger's scorn for progress is taken up again in the later poem 'weiterung' (1964, *Im Gewitter*, pp. 219f.), a deeply pessimistic statement on the future of humanity. Quite a number of poems in Enzensberger's second volume, *landsprache* (1960) are concerned with the environment. 'das ende der eulen' and 'ich, der präsident und die biber' (*Im Gewitter*, pp. 221f., 225) are an

indictment of man's domination of nature, his quest for short-term profit at the expense of allowing whole species of animals and plants to become extinct, in a world of polar warming, in which everything is monitored by radar, surrounded by safety barriers and military manoeuvres, and man is oblivious to the dangers of nuclear weapons. 'isotop' and 'an alle fernsprecheilnehmer' (*Im Gewitter*, pp. 117, 171f.) prophesy a creeping death as a result of the 'dürre flut' of nuclear contamination, radiation serving at the same time as a metaphor for man's complacent self-indulgence regarding material goods and blind faith in technology. It is interesting to note the Romantic roots of such seemingly rational criticism. The poems of Enzensberger's first two volumes reveal earth mysticism and a regressive tendency reminiscent of Gottfried Benn. His criticism of modern society and man's alienation in it is essentially individualist, and contains elements of escapism, anticivilizational irrationalism and elitist scorn for the masses. The impetus behind such poems as 'spur der zukunft' (*Im Gewitter*, p. 221) and 'hänie auf den apfel' (*Im Gewitter*, p. 220), castigating man's destruction of the earth, and rejecting his plans for the future ('ich will es nicht leiden, / was wir langsam, langsam, langsam begehen'), reflects no belief in socialism offering a practicable alternative to capitalist exploitation, but rather a stance of aestheticized vitalism. This was to change for a period in the late 1960s and early 1970s: in his 'Critique of Political Ecology' in 1973 Enzensberger regards the achievement of ecological balance as a prerequisite for 'the rule of freedom' with which true socialism is identical.³⁷

II.ii The Revival of Interest in Nature in the Late 1960s, Agitatory Verse and Resignation in the 1970s

Leaving aside Enzensberger, remarkably little West German poetry in the 1960s was concerned with ecological problems. Only towards the end of the decade came recognition that a conversation about trees was not necessarily a crime, to use Brecht's celebrated phrase.³⁸ Erich Fried, who emerged as one of the most important political poets in the decade, came to domestic environmental issues via Vietnam. His poem 'Gespräch über Bäume', published in 1967, was one of the first in a series of texts making the point that nature as a topic no longer distracted from political issues, but rather led to the heart of them. It presents the trauma of the 1960s, the brutal subjugation of an impoverished people by a wealthy imperial power in the name of freedom and democracy,

involving destruction of nature on a massive scale through napalm and blanket bombing. In the first of three verses relativizing the domestic concerns of everyday life by contrasting them with the situation in Vietnam, the curling up of leaves on Fried's pear tree leads the poet to reflect on the chemical defoliation practised by the Americans in Vietnam:

Seit der Gärtner die Zweige gestutzt hat
sind meine Äpfel größer
Aber die Blätter des Birnbaums
sind krank. Sie rollen sich ein

In Vietnam sind die Bäume entlaubt
[...]

(*Moderne deutsche Naturlyrik*, p. 180)

Fried's much anthologized, nonetheless ambivalent poem 'Neue Naturdichtung' (*Moderne deutsche Naturlyrik*, p. 179; *Im Gewitter*, p. 58; *Die Erde will*, pp. 455f.), published in 1972, demands of the modern nature poet a revelation of the contradictions in society (here exposure of the exploitation and destruction of landscapes by speculators) and reveals the inappropriateness as the subject of poetry of private aesthetic experience of nature. However at the same time Fried is here ironically critical of the self-satisfaction of *poésie engagée*, and appears to suggest the importance of remaining open to new sensual experiences. A number of established nature poets began to adopt an ecologically critical stance by the early 1970s: Karl Krolow published 'Es wird immer windiger' in 1975 (*Im Gewitter*, p. 130), and the aging Marieluise Kaschnitz revolted against man's destruction of himself and the environment in 'Die Gärten', and against 'Notwendigkeiten / der EWG' in 'Notwendigkeiten' (*Im Gewitter*, pp. 48, 62f., also *Die Erde will*, p. 402).

A wave of politically engaged writing in the early 1970s continued the impetus of the student movement in the ecological sphere. On the one hand there were the polemical aphorisms of Arnfried Astel (e.g. 'Umweltverschmutzung', 'Blendend weiße Zähne', *Im Gewitter*, p. 73) or Rolf Haufs, indictments of the inequity of ownership of land and power in poems such as 'Kein schöner Land' and 'Besitzverhältnisse' (*Im Gewitter*, pp. 174f., 196f.) by the DKP member and co-founder of 'Hamburg linksliterarisch' and the 'Hamburger Gruppe schreibender Arbeiter' Peter Schütt, and the *Alltagslyrik* of Ludwig Fels (e.g. 'Natur', 'Konsumterror' and 'Müll-Ode', *Im Gewitter*, pp. 52, 150f., 153f.) or Bodo Morshäuser. On the other hand, the tradition of protest songs was taken up by environmental campaigners and proved particularly effective when

linked with the revival of dialect poetry. Walter Moßmann's 'In Mueders Stübche',³⁹ written in Allemannic dialect, was accessible to both Germans and French living in the area near the proposed site of the nuclear power station at Wyhl in Baden-Württemberg. His 'Ballade von Seveso' (*Thema: Natur*, pp. 123–5), which draws parallels between the disaster following an Italian chemical explosion and acid rain in the Federal Republic, and the felling of trees for airport runways, motorways and building programmes, also provided a rallying point in the environmental movement.⁴⁰

Alongside such agitational poetry integrated in the ecological movement, what has been called 'Lyrik der beschädigten Welt'⁴¹ emerged after the political and cultural *Tendenzwende* of 1974. The anger and protest of the student movement yielded to disillusionment, resignation and irony in a political climate of repression. The public was better informed about general political issues, and German and international ecological developments than ever before, but seemingly unable to bring about significant change in either field. The threat to and exploitation of the environment reflect the helplessness and fears of the individual. The waste land of Rolf-Dieter Brinkmann's poems in *Westwärts 1 & 2* (published posthumously in 1975), a disturbed landscape of neglect and individual isolation, a no-man's-land between city and country, featuring hoardings and empty parking lots, abandoned cars and polluted rivers, eerily lit by blinking neon signs, were to exercise a powerful influence in the later 1970s. In 'Gedicht' (*Im Gewitter*, p. 106) Brinkmann responds to a 'zerstörte Landschaft mit / Konserven Dosen', 'und Staub, / zerstückelte Pavane, aus totem / Neon, Zeitungen und Schienen', with thoughts of death ('was krieg ich jetzt, / einen Tag älter, tiefer und tot?') and withdrawal from reality ('Wer hat gesagt, daß sowas Leben / ist? Ich gehe in ein / anderes Blau').

Jürgen Theobald's 'Ohne Blumen' (*Thema: Natur*, p. 13, also *Im Gewitter*, pp. 165f.) revokes Utopian ideals ('Die Utopien sind zurück / in die Schubladen gepackt worden') and describes a demonstration at Brokdorf, on the lower Elbe, in 1977, in a tone of utter despondency:

die Leute gehen in schmalen Schlangen
über die Felder. Ein Graben,
dahinter Rollen aus Stacheldraht,
schmutzige Polizisten, die Gesichter
abwesend hingehalten in die Teleobjektive.
[...]

Auf welcher Seite geht die Geschichte
vorwärts? Wörter, ausgefallen wie Zähne,
es sieht schlimm aus, sagt einer
und verweigert den Schluß, der ermütern
soll.
[...]

Deine Angst hat
im Februar Geburtstag, lese ich bei dir,
meine im März. Schwarzes Orakel, wir
können die letzten sein, die letzten,
mit ersticken Gitarren gelehnt irgendwohin,
für das es nie mehr einen Namen geben
wird, kein Lied, keinen Rhythmus, nichts.

Nicolas Born's important elegy 'Entsorgt' (*Im Gewitter*, pp. 115f.) argues that man has become 'entsorgt [...] von sich selbst', or relieved of his responsibility and individuality, in a world in which fear of the danger nuclear reactors constitute has worn off as part of everyday life, a life 'am Tropf/ der Systeme', in which he is 'gefangen in verruchter Vernunft', with 'kein Schritt mehr frei, kein Atem/ kein Wasser unerfaßt'. Born's speech on the award of the *Bremer Literaturpreis* in 1977 reveals a strange mixture of impassioned plea for an end to the madness of Germany's nuclear energy programme and the planned destruction of natural resources through economic growth, with passivity: 'Ich habe weder zu warnen noch zu mahnen, denn ich bin nicht, weil Schriftsteller, auch ein Moralist' (*Thema: Natur*, p. 115). This stance exemplifies the condition he diagnoses in his generation: 'Unsere Sinne und unser Bewußtsein sind schon weitgehend anästhesiert.'

Jürgen Becker, perhaps the foremost contemporary West German landscape poet, similarly records an environment formed and deformed by man in poems such as 'Privatbereich' (*Moderne deutsche Naturlyrik*, p. 239; *Im Gewitter*, p. 55) from the volume *Das Ende der Landschaftsmalerei* (1974), precisely observing the impact of industrialization, deforestation, tourism, road construction, air traffic and suburban gardeners. However the critical impulse is again blunted by the passivity of the observer, by the incidental and casual nature of his record of abuse of the environment. His 'Natur-Gedicht', inspired by the 'Kahlschlag, Kieselhügel, Krater' of a construction site, ends in an ambivalent blend of melancholy acceptance and critical irony:

nichts Neues; kaputte Natur,
aber ich vergesse das gern,
solange ein Strauch steht
(*Moderne deutsche Naturlyrik*, pp. 239f.,
also *Im Gewitter*, p. 54)

Günter Kunert's poetry is here more radical: the volumes he has published since moving to the Federal Republic in 1979 reveal a vivid consciousness of threatening ecological catastrophe and apocalyptic vision, expressed in a tone of angry melancholy. 'Unterwegs nach Utopia II' (*Moderne deutsche Naturlyrik*, pp. 216f., also *Im Gewitter*, pp. 224f.) relates how flight from a landscape of concrete 'grau und gründlich' ends only in an artificial paradise of green-coloured glass. 'Irgendewas' (*Im Gewitter*, pp. 178f.), reminiscent of Enzensberger's 'an alle fernsprechteilnehmer', uses the insidious contamination of radiation as an image for our corruption by modern civilization. The poems 'Lagebericht' (*Im Gewitter*, p. 173), 'Predigt' (*Im Gewitter*, p. 229), 'Erinnerung an Babylon' (*Im Gewitter*, p. 90f.) and 'Mutation' (*Die Erde will*, pp. 424f.) exemplify Kunert's ever increasing pessimism:

Nur noch Natur
ist uns geblieben oder was
von ihr geblieben ist
[...]

Wir sitzen
im schwarzen Licht
essen Gift trinken Säure
wir denken wir leben
und verschieben die Folgen
auf Morgen
(*Im Gewitter*, p. 173)

[...]
Unaufgeräumte Spätzeit
kurz vor dem Dunkelwerden erfüllt
von Blech aus Fabriken
Rädern und Gedränge
von Worten die jeden überfahren
geregelt
ist alles längst
wenig noch zu ordnen
ein paar Einzelne einzuschwören
auf den Tod mit dem
klangvollen Namen

Nacht heißt die letzte Zuflucht
Finsternis und freiwillige Abwesenheit
Starr auf dem Rücken liegen bleiben
Die Flügel gefaltet
im Gebet um Vergessensein.
(*Im Gewitter*, p. 229)

III Environmental Issues in East German Literature

III.1 First Doubts Concerning Technology and Progress in the GDR in the 1960s

The West German anthologies from which texts have been quoted contain texts by a dozen poets writing in the GDR. At least two anthologies, Edgar Marsch's *Moderne deutsche Naturlyrik* and Mayer-Tasch's *Im Gewitter der Geraden* would have included more had their editors been granted permission by the authors or copyright-holding GDR publishers.⁴² To round off the picture I have therefore also consulted *Die eigene Stimme*, a representative survey of forty years of GDR poetry edited by the East German expert on nature poetry Ursula Heukenkamp together with the poets Heinz Kahlau and Wulf Kirsten in 1988.⁴³ The following picture emerges: Protest against the testing of atomic bombs in the 1950s comparable to Weyrauch's, Eich's or Bachmann's is to be found in Stephan Hermlin's 'Die Vögel und der Test' (1957, *Die Erde will*, pp. 418f., also *Die eigene Stimme*, p. 89), which describes birds being forced to change their migration route by an atomic explosion, concluding: 'Laßt diese Änderung euer Herz erschüttern...', and Armin Müller's 'Ich habe den Thunfisch gegessen' (also 1957, in *Die eigene Stimme*, pp. 178-81). Poems from Peter Huchel's volume *Claussen Claussen* (1963) such as 'Das Zeichen' (*Die Erde will*, pp. 22f.) are close to the apocalyptically prophetic tone and metaphysical imagery of Eich and Bachmann.⁴⁴ 'Die Rückkehr', a poem from Huchel's last volume *Die neuente Stunde*, written after he had moved to the West, shows the poet's consistent stance of uncompromising pessimism:

Die stumme Gesellschaft,
in Kähnen kam sie hierher,
noch einmal
den ungebrochenen Glanz des Wassers zu sehen,
die Gewißheit des Sommers,
die Hibiscusbüte in der Farbe der Mitra.
[...]
Die Kähne versanken
im wäßrigen Schatten der Erlen.
(*Thema: Natur*, p. 118;
Im Gewitter, p. 226,
and *Die Erde will*, p. 423)

More significant for the politico-cultural discourse in the GDR in the 1960s were the views expressed in the heated debate on poetry in the youth magazine *Forum* in 1966. In response to an editorial enquiry as to the consequences of the technological revolution for the content and

structure of poetry, Günter Kunert called official premises and assumptions in question by stressing the destructive potential of modern technology and distinguishing between advances in technology and social and humanitarian progress: 'Mir scheint als bedeutendste technische Revolution [...] die Massenvernichtung von Menschen, das möglich gewordene Ende allen Lebens. Am Anfang des technischen Zeitalters steht Auschwitz, steht Hiroshima, die ich nur in bezug auf gesellschaftlich organisiert verwendete Technik hier in einem Atemzug nenne.'⁴⁵ Kunert's mother was Jewish, so it is not surprising that he here mentions Auschwitz and submitted the poem 'Notizen in Kreide'⁴⁶ with its reminder of the fate of six million Jews together with his response. In fact his fundamental scepticism regarding technology had already been expressed in poems such as 'Laika' (*Moderne deutsche Naturlyrik*, p. 215, also *Im Gewitter*, p. 235) from the volume *Erinnerung an einen Planeten* in 1963, and his opposition to nuclear weapons in 'Botschaft' (reminiscent of Eich) and 'Der Schatten' (*Die eigene Stimme*, pp. 163—6) from *Der ungetriebene Gast* (1965), the volume marking his transition from enlightenment optimism to sceptical individualism. Warning of the fatal consequences of a technological progress with which man's moral and ethical development cannot keep pace is a constant theme in Kunert's *Warngedichte* in the 1960s and 1970s, which treat damage to the environment, bureaucracy, industrialization and social alienation besides the atomic threat. As with Enzensberger, some of Kunert's early poems, such as 'Der Herbst spielt' (*Moderne deutsche Naturlyrik*, p. 215), indicate his basic stance as they reveal how he derives comfort from the idea of nature's permanence; he also shares the West German poet's tendency towards sweeping rejection of modern civilization.⁴⁷

Accused of an 'intellektuell hilflose spädbürgerliche Gesamthaltung' by the editor of *Forum*, Rudolph Bahro (who was to withdraw his support for the Party in 1968, and publish his analysis of GDR political and ecological problems *Die Alternative* in 1977), Kunert was supported by a small number of younger poets including Rainer Kirsch, Sarah Kirsch and Karl Mikel. In 1965 Rainer and Sarah Kirsch had questioned faith in technology in their poetry volume *Gespräch mit dem Saurier*.⁴⁸ Their environmental awareness is revealed in anthologized texts from the 1970s — Sarah Kirsch's characteristic landscape poem 'Im Sommer', which expresses the tension between longing for withdrawal into idyllic scenes and consciousness of their deceptive nature when news comes

from outside ('Noch fliegt die Graugans, spaziert der Storch / Durch unvergiffene Wiesen [...] Wenn man hier keine Zeitung hält / Ist die Welt in Ordnung'),⁴⁹ (*Thema: Natur*, p. 63; *Moderne deutsche Naturlyrik*, p. 251; *Die Erde will*, p. 124), and Rainer Kirsch's more prosaic 'Protokoll':

[...]
 In lila Bächen
 Fahren die Laugen in die Flüsse, eisern
 Stehn die Politiker. Ich geh am Abend
 Durch Sägewerke, die schwarz stehn gleich Wäldern
 Und zu Papiermühlen hinfühn, welche Rollen
 Herstellen für Plakate, die man klebt
 Mit Texten SCHUTZT DEN WALD, noch wächst das Gras
 Ich hörs nicht aber riech es, das ist Hoffnung.
 (*Thema: Natur*, p. 100,
 and *Im Gewitter*, p. 210)

After the building of the Berlin Wall the cultural and political authorities were for a time prepared to accept franker recognition of the shortcomings of everyday reality in the GDR — passages in Christa Wolf's novel *Der geteilte Himmel* and Erik Neutsch's *Spur der Steine* acknowledged smog and the pollution of rivers in the industrialized south of the Republic.⁵⁰ Erwin Strittmatter's shorter prose reveals a gradual revision of the anthropocentric world view of the 1960s, and his growing unease about the environment, though his diaries in which this development is most clearly expressed were not published until 1981.⁵¹ Nature poetry was arguably at a relative disadvantage, because of official expectations of harmony. Poets such as Georg Maurer, Johannes R. Becher and Louis Fünberg had depicted landscapes whose beauty stood for social harmony and a harmonious relationship between man and nature. Pollution and disturbance of environmental balance were regarded as regrettable but isolated and temporary phenomena. Nonetheless, traces of environmental concern are discernible in a number of poems written in the 1960s. Kito Lorenc writes bilingually in Sorbian and German about his native Lausitz, which was at this time bearing the brunt of industrial expansion in the GDR through exploitation of the brown coal beneath its woods, fields and villages. While supporting industrial progress as the source of man's material well-being, he is not silent regarding the losses incurred in the process. The elegiac poem 'Struga' (1966, *Die eigene Stimme*, pp. 271f.) relates how the river has been rerouted and channelled, 'übelriechend', 'ein Abwasser, trüb', 'wässern-de Strieme / im rändigen Fell der Landschaft'. Reiner Kunze uses com-

mercial afforestation as the source of powerful images for social oppression of the individual in 'Sensible Wege' and 'Der Hochwald erzieht seine Bäume' (1969, *Die Erde will*, pp. 406f.). In a striking poem entitled 'Das Flachland vor Leipzig' (*Die eigene Stimme*, p. 279), published in 1966, Elke Erb reviews the flat, bare, dusty landscape around Leipzig and finds herself called by the primeval state of a goose to reflect on man's potential for self-destruction and destruction of the planet. Less challenging are Jens Gerlach's satirical verses 'Kriegserklärung', 'zeitwandeln' and 'weekend-report', from the volume *Der See*, exposing man's impact as tourist on the countryside (*Im Gewitter*, pp. 51, 92f., 138—42).

The generation of poets who emerged in the 1960s, who have been regarded in the West as exemplifying 'pioneering mentality' (Volker Braun, Heinz Czechowski, Wulf Kirsten, Karl Mickel and others), reveal already, on closer examination of their work in the late 1960s, tensions between enthusiasm for the state industrialization programme and consciousness of the ecological dangers involved. The Dresden and Leipzig poet Heinz Czechowski's 'Wasserfahrt' (1967, *Im Gewitter*, pp. 216f.), in which the flow of river water serves as central image for the inevitability of progress, ends on a note of caution, asking the price of technological development:

[...]
 Es muß doch da etwas sein,
 Was den Fortschritt befiehlt, dieses
 Gleiten auf sanften Gewässern,
 Auf Schienen, Elektronengehirnen, Systemen,
 Kalkulierbaren: Rückkoppelung
 Auf die Erscheinung des Menschen.
 Aber wenn da etwas verloren ging
 Vom Liebesgeflüster, von
 Der Fahrt auf dem Fluß, vom Grün
 Und der Wölbung des Bergs, was
 blieb?⁵²

Volker Braun has, of course, been seen as the principal protagonist of the pioneering or 'Promethean' approach, terms used by Western critics to imply naive anachronism, and it would indeed be foolish to suggest that poems such as 'Von Martschuks Leuten', 'Das weite Feld' or 'Messe'⁵³ did not reflect supreme confidence in man's ability to control and shape his environment. However others, while retaining their optimistic impetus, are not necessarily silent on the hardships industrialization inflicted on GDR workers or the violence done to the landscape.⁵⁴ Many

texts from the volume *Gegen die symmetrische Welt*, written between 1969 and 1973, integrate elements of melancholic scepticism, irritation, and suppressed consciousness of loss. Braun fuses pride and optimism over a landscape which documents human intelligence and achievement with traces of anger and sorrow over the violence done to the human environment. The title of the poem 'Landwüst' (*Moderne deutsche Naturlyrik*, pp. 253f., *Die Erde will*, pp. 426f.) refers to a village in Braun's native Vogtland. However, it seems reasonable to associate it also with the historical violence related in the poem, and the provocative ruthlessness which speaks from the lines 'Natürlich bleibt nichts./ Nichts bleibt natürlich'. Similarly, the cumulative impact of the past participle describing brown coal mining in the much anthologized poem 'Durchgearbeitete Landschaft' (*Moderne deutsche Naturlyrik*, pp. 254f.; *Im Gewitter*, p. 42; *Die Erde will*, p. 428) — 'verendet', 'durchlöchert', 'ausgepumpt, umzingelt', 'aufgerissen', 'weggeschnitten', 'überfahren', 'abgeteuf', 'ausgelöffelt', 'zerhackt, verschüttet,/ zersiebt', 'durchgewalkt und entseelt und zerklüftet' — and adjectives such as 'mitleidlos' must relativize the harmony of the 'newborn' landscape at the end, and leave us conscious of the ambivalence of the phrase describing the lake: 'der Erde/ Aufgeschlagenes Auge'. It is interesting to compare Karl Mickel's thematically related poem 'Der See' (*Die eigene Stimme*, p. 202). This was written in 1963, and was at the centre of the debate on poetry in *Forum* in 1966. Fiercely criticized by the establishment arbiter Hans Koch, it appears at first reading to share the anarcho-vitalist ruthlessness of the young Volker Braun, but ultimately exposes the shortcomings of state-approved activism through its violent images and the allusion to rotting vegetation and refuse. In the early 1970s Mickel wrote poems attacking pollution ('Mottek sagt 1', *Die eigene Stimme*, pp. 203f.), and inhuman working practices ('Bier. Für Leising', *Die eigene Stimme*, p. 205).

III.ii The Environmental Debate in the 1970s

The 1970s witnessed gradual official willingness to face up to the existence of environmental problems in the GDR and considerable unofficial ecological concern, opening up a public debate in which literature, including poetry, has played a part. By 1977, Harald Hartung was writing 'Inzwischen verfängt der Hinweis auf die Rückständigkeit der DDR-Entwicklung nicht mehr.'⁵⁵ Some seventy percent of the GDR's energy has been derived from burning lignite, or brown coal, which produces

quantities of dust and ash in mining and combustion.⁵⁶ The first environmental legislation in the GDR was introduced in 1970, and in 1973 a budget was set aside for an environmental investment programme. There was some genuine improvement in the early 1970s, however increasing economic pressures and the sharp rise in oil prices then necessitated a return to expansion of coal production, and even exploitation of new deposits with a particularly high sulphur content. Open-cast mining has meant whole villages disappearing in the relatively densely populated Halle-Leipzig area, and the associated lowering of the water table has affected the agriculture of the region. Few major industries could afford to install and use effective filters for smoke and effluents. At the same time inefficient and environmentally damaging farming techniques actually became more widespread in agricultural co-operatives, where dubious amelioration of soils was carried out and heavy machinery necessitated insensitive standardization; fertilizers and pesticides were used to excess, and the reorganization of labour along industrial lines meant the loss of a sense of individual responsibility on the part of the worker for the animals or fields he or she worked.

Perception of such deterioration and recognition that environmental policies had not been successful led to the founding of the *Gesellschaft für Natur und Umwelt* in 1980, an organization mediating between official state bodies and unofficial environmental groups. Its members were in the main professionally involved with environmental issues: botanists, foresters, commercial growers, ornithologists, meteorologists and architects. In addition to practical initiatives they formed the first eco-lobby in the GDR, which, modest though it was, exercised some influence over administrative decisions. Within the church ecological issues had been debated since the early 1970s. Environmental groups were formed, local campaigns carried through, circulars published, and an environmental library established to disseminate information and encourage research. Though the limitations of natural resources were discussed in official journals, and practical methods of environmental protection welcomed where they were not too costly, the Club of Rome report was officially dismissed as an attempt to stabilize capitalism, and radical proposals for a socialist alternative to growth such as Wolfgang Harich's *Kommunismus ohne Wachstum? Babuf und der Club of Rome* (Reinbek, 1975) and Rudolph Bahro's *Die Alternative. Zur Kritik des real existierenden Sozialismus* (Cologne, 1977) remained

anathema. It would thus be wrong to suggest a linear or uniform development of ecological concern.

Literary contributions to a more open-minded public dialogue on the environment throughout the 1970s included doubts as to aspects of scientific progress expressed periodically by Christa Wolf, from her story 'Neue Lebensansichten eines Katers' (1970) onwards, Plenzdorf's challenge to progress and achievement as social ideals in *Die neuen Leiden des jungen W.* (1972),⁵⁷ and publications in journals by Erwin Strittmatter, Juri Brezan and Joseph Pischel.⁵⁸ In 1979 Kunert was able to publish a letter to the editor of *Sinn und Form*, explaining why he had spoken of a 'symmetry' of environmental problems facing socialist and capitalist countries, together with a critique of industrialization, alienation, loss of individuality and economic growth.⁵⁹ Hanns Cibulka's novel *Swintow*, which describes the genesis of the powerful environmental poem 'Lagebericht', was written in 1980, and published in extract form in *Sinn und Form* in 1981, appearing in book form in 1982. Cibulka questions the security of nuclear reactors in the GDR, as well as calling for a more general change in values. His book was at the centre of a broad public debate 1982–1984, and has been described by Anita Mallinckrodt as exercising 'a significant influence on changing political culture values in the GDR'.⁶⁰ Other prose works reflecting the growth of public concern for the environment in the early 1980s have included Benno Plüdra's novel for children *Insel der Schwäne* (1980), of which a controversial film was made in 1983, Juri Brezan's *Krabat oder die Verwandlung der Welt* (1980), Monika Maron's *Flugasche* (1981), Gabriele Eckart's documentary 'Havelobst' (1984) and stories by Joachim Nowotny and others, followed by Christa Wolf's warnings of depersonalization as the price of progress in her Frankfurt lectures in 1983 (*Kassandra*), and *Störfall* on the Chernobyl disaster in 1986.⁶¹

Whereas literature in general has provided a forum for the discussion of topics largely excluded from the media in the GDR, up to the late 1970s poets were freer than prose writers to treat ecological issues, perhaps because they have traditionally championed the non-utilitarian, or even the irrational, perhaps also because their audience and possible impact were limited. (Poetry readings, often held in churches, have however been a feature of the environmental movement in the GDR.) Older writers such as Hanns Cibulka and Walter Werner, the 'middle generation' (Kirsten, Czechowski, Mickel and Braun), also Ulrich Berkes,

Jürgen Rennert, Axel Schulze and Richard Pietraß, and the younger poets Thomas Rosenlöcher, Gabriele Eckart, Steffen Mensching and Ralph Grüneberger published poems containing outright criticism in the 1970s, often however, as in the West, fused with resignation.⁶² This qualitative change, dating from around 1970, was registered and welcomed in a series of articles by GDR Germanists at the end of the decade. Wulf Kirsten's anthology *Veränderte Landschaft* (1979) was the first GDR collection of nature poetry with an appreciable ecological dimension. Ursula Heukenkamp wrote in her review in 1980:

Das bejähende Verhältnis zur Industrielandschaft wandelt sich schnell. Die Beispiele ließen sich ergänzen. Beton, Rauch und Öl verunstalten die Landschaften in der Lyrik der 70er Jahre. Und der Rauch kann nicht mehr als tröstliches Zeichen der Anwesenheit vom Menschen in der Natur verstanden werden. Ebenso wie Öl und Beton zeigt er vielmehr den Zwiespalt zwischen den unmittelbaren Bedürfnissen des Individuums und dem gegebenen Stand der gesellschaftlichen Nutzung der Natur als Rohstoff an.⁶³

In an article entitled 'Abschied von der schönen Natur', she writes in 1981 of the poets' new sense of the preservation of nature as a 'moral imperative', and of their 'Abfallandschaften' both as 'Appell an die ökologische Vernunft' and social metaphor: 'So ist der Wildwuchs der Landschaft unbewältigte Widersprüchlichkeit der Gesellschaft'.⁶⁴ Finally, Klaus Schuhmann reviews the ecological poetry of the early 1980s in an article entitled 'Lageberichte zur ökologischen Situation' in 1986, beginning: 'Die Zeit der heiter-beschaulichen dichterischen Ausflüge ins Naturrefugium ist ebenso vorbei wie die der stürmisch-prometheischen Natureroberungen, von denen die Lyrik der DDR lange Zeit nicht schlecht lebte'.⁶⁵

Among the examples of such poetry to be found in the anthologies examined are Volker Braun's 'Die Mummelfälle' (*Im Gewitter*, pp. 99f.), describing the deterioration of a historic beauty spot through water pollution, litter from tourists, and damage to trees from acid rain, written 1980 and published 1983,⁶⁶ and a number of poems published by Heinz Czechowski in the 1970s, including 'Flußfahrt' (1973, *Die eigene Stimme*, pp. 223–5), with its castigation of the spewing of lead from petrol fumes,⁶⁷ and 'Landschaftsschutzgebiet' (1978, *Im Gewitter*, pp. 43f.), a bitter, polemic record of hypocrisy and seemingly arbitrary destruction: 'Der Baggerzahn ist der Zahn unserer Zeit, hoch türmt er/die ach so verletzte Haut des Planeten.' Axel Schulze, one of the first GDR poets to describe pollution in landscape poetry, and author of

critical texts in the 1970s such as 'Menzer Forst' (1973, *Die eigene Stimme*, p. 320), has not emerged as an authoritative voice on the environment. His depiction of the industrialized landscape in Sachsen-Anhalt assumes all too readily nature's ability to regenerate, and is relativized by the idyllic scenes in much of his verse. Wulf Kirsten's poems are here more consistent, tracing the destruction of villages through unrestricted building, atmospheric pollution and acid rain, and the undignified demise of the rural way of life ('dorf' (1974), 'der bleibaum' (1975), 'schiefergebirge' (1976), 'lebensspuren' (1979–1981), in *Die eigene Stimme*, pp. 266–70). Jürgen Rennert is represented by 'An den Caputher Gärten' (1974), describing with melancholy the monotony of the vast fruit orchards west of Berlin, testifying to bureaucratic incompetence and hypocrisy:

[...]

Gerümpel. Stahlbetonverliese:

Die Regenwasserauffangbecken

Der braunen Obstbaumparadiese.

Es stirbt das Land an seinen Zwecken.

(*Die eigene Stimme*, pp. 328f.)

Finally, Richard Pietraß presents a tree fighting for its life in the city in 'Der Ringende' (1979, *Die Erde will*, p. 324, and *Die eigene Stimme*, p. 333), and predicts nature's revenge in Eich-like terms in 'Die Schattenalge' (1981, *Die eigene Stimme*, pp. 333f.) through the image of a seaweed which thrives on man's destruction of the environment.

IV Conclusion

Environmental Concern as a Factor Unifying East and West German Culture

If it is true that the shift in political-culture values in the GDR towards ecological considerations took place about a decade later than in the West, this pattern is only partially mirrored in the sphere of literature. The position in the GDR in the 1960s was less single-mindedly Promethean than has sometimes been stated, and we have seen that if one disregards Enzensberger, environmental concern in the West was at this time practically limited to the nuclear issue, *Ökolyrik* only emerging at the end of the decade. By no means all impulses are then directed from West to East either: we observe a roughly parallel development, in

which essentially conservative concern for the preservation of nature, with roots in Romanticism, acquires a progressive or emancipatory dimension. In both West and East German poetry this process is linked with a revival of regionalism (the Sorbs Jurij Brezan, Jurij Koch and Kito Lorenc playing a significant part in the GDR), and a reevaluation of the concept of *Heimat*.⁶⁸ Shared environmental experience and shared apprehensions led in the 1970s to disillusionment and resignation, in a political climate showing certain similarities in the two German states. The intrinsic differences between the two literatures were then partially bridged in the 1970s — in poetry perhaps more so than in narrative fiction. Jürgen Becker in the West, Heinz Czechowski in the GDR, to take but two examples, draw constant parallels between the threat of self-destruction through environmental damage and the arms race, the one becoming a paradigm of the other. German environmental literature in East and West has provided a documentation and a warning. At its weakest, it consists in the West of abstract dogmatic statement of Green ideology, ignoring other social problems, or passive acceptance of the subject as victim of an inhuman society, and in the East indulges in hypocrisy or escapism. At its best, it has successfully fused analysis of individual experience and feeling with social concern, and formulated with honesty the tension between the social necessities of technological advance and respect for nature.

GDR literature has been less isolated than sometimes suggested: Wulf Kirsten for instance has dated his ecological concern as beginning in 1969 or 1970, when he read Rachel Carson's *Silent Spring*.⁶⁹ Western and Eastern poets alike have taken Brecht's 'An die Nachgeborenen' and other nature poems as a starting point, and if Eich, Bachmann and Enzensberger have influenced younger GDR poets, Huchel's imagery is also perceptible in some of the eschatological poems of the later 1970s and 1980s in the West. Indeed, of the writers moving from East to West, at least Kunert and Sarah Kirsch have not found themselves out of step. GDR writers facing up to the consequences and implications of man's short-sighted exploitation of nature in the 1970s and 1980s had to come to terms with their own earlier views and *Aufbauoptimismus*, and the results have been at times a more reflected and significant contribution to ecological poetry than glib political statement or *Fortschrittspessimismus* in the West.⁷⁰ The integration almost unnoticed of East German texts in all the West German anthologies examined is a final indication of how

ecology has served as a focus for broad consciousness of social and political problems in both Germanys over the last twenty years, and reflected concern for the future of humanity going beyond any individual state.⁷¹

NOTES

- 1 Miscellaneous information on the history of ecology and the ecological movement in Germany is to be found in *Börsenblatt für den deutschen Buchhandel*, 28 April 1987 (Schwerpunkt-Nr. 'Ökologie'), pp. 1269–364, which also contains Susanne Mittag's brief but stimulating article on environmental poetry. 'Aber der Herr sprach Es werde Mensch Und die Erde ward wüst und leer', pp. 1344–7. See further Rolf Peter Sieferle (ed.), *Fortschritte der Naturzerstörung*, Frankfurt/Main, 1986; Ludwig Treppl: *Geschichte der Ökologie. Vom 17. Jahrhundert bis zur Gegenwart. 10 Vorlesungen*, Frankfurt/Main, 1987; Ulrich Linse: *Ökopax und Anarchie. Eine Geschichte der ökologischen Bewegungen in Deutschland*, Munich, 1986; Klaus-Georg Wey: *Umweltpolitik in Deutschland. Kurze Geschichte des Umweltschutzes in Deutschland seit 1900*, Opladen, 1982.
- 2 Julius von Schröder and Carl Reuss (eds.): *Die Beschädigung der Vegetation durch Rauch und die Oberharzer Hüttenaustschäden*, Berlin, 1883 (Hildesheim, 1986).
- 3 Henry David Thoreau: *Walden. The Duty of Civil Disobedience*, ed. by M. Meyer, Harmondsworth, 1983 (1st edn: *Walden, or Life in the Woods*, Boston, 1854).
- 4 Samuel Butler: *Erewhon*, ed. by Peter Modford, Harmondsworth, 1970 (1st edn: *Erewhon, or Over the Range*, Edinburgh, 1872).
- 5 Henrik Ibsen: *An Enemy of the People. The Wild Duck. Rosmerholm*, Oxford, 1988 (1st edn: *En Folkefiende*, Copenhagen, 1882).
- 6 Wilhelm Raabe: *Sämtliche Werke*, ed. by K. Hoppe et al., Göttingen, 1960ff., XVI (1st edn: Leipzig, 1884). For an informative and perceptive, though polemically anti-ecological introduction, see Jeffrey L. Sammons: *Raabe. Pfisters Mühe*, London, 1988.
- 7 For instance *One-dimensional Man. Studies in the Ideology of Advanced Industrial Society*, New York, 1964 (= *Der eindimensionale Mensch*, Darmstadt, 1967).
- 8 In particular *The Myth of the Machine*, New York, 1967–70 (= *Mythos der Maschine*, Vienna, 1974, and in the Fischer Alternativreihe, Frankfurt/Main, 1977).
- 9 E. F. Schumacher: *Small is Beautiful. A Study of Economics as if People Mattered*, New York, 1973 (= *Die Rückkehr zum menschlichen Maß. Alternativen für Wirtschaft und Technik*, Reinbek, 1977).
- 10 Rachel Louise Carson: *Silent Spring*, New York, 1962 (= *Der stumme Frühling*, Munich, 1963, and in dtv, 1968).
- 11 Dennis Meadows et al.: *The Limits to Growth. A Report for the Club of Rome's Project on the Predicament of Mankind*, New York, 1972 (= *Die Grenzen des Wachstums*, Stuttgart, 1972).
- 12 For example, the Bundesverband Bürgerinitiativen Umweltschutz (founded in 1972) and the Bund für Umwelt und Naturschutz Deutschland (founded in 1975).
- 13 In 1975 the conservative politician Herbert Gruhl published his widely read book *Ein Planet wird geplündert*, and the enormous success of the 'Fischer Alternativ-Reihe', of which this was the opening number, is indicative of the new interest in ecological issues outside the fringe Left or Right.
- 14 The idea of nature as a subject with which man must be reconciled was adapted by the young Karl Marx from Schelling, and has been expanded on by Adorno, Bloch (who speaks of the necessity of an 'alliance' between man and nature), Marcuse and Habermas. See Jürgen Haupt: "Gespräch über Bäume". Zum Natur- und Entfremdungsproblem in sozialistischer Lyrik der Gegenwart, *Die Horen*, vol. 88, 1972, pp. 8–23; Silvia Volckmann: *Zeit der Kirschen? Das Naturbild in der deutschen Gegenwartsliteratur*; Jürgen Becker, Sarah Kirsch, Wolf Biermann, Hans Magnus Enzensberger, Königstein/

- 15 Ts., 1982, pp. 17–33; Jürgen Haupt: *Natur und Lyrik. Naturbeziehungen im 20. Jahrhundert*, Stuttgart, 1983, pp. 207–27 ('Theorie: Gesellschafts-Philosophie und Naturutopie').
- 16 *Tierenfisch 12. Thema: Natur. Oder: Warum ein Gespräch über Bäume heute kein Verbrechen mehr ist*, ed. by Hans Christoph Buch, Berlin 1977, p. 7.
- 17 Edgar March (ed.): *Moderne deutsche Naturlyrik*, Stuttgart, 1980.
- 18 The term 'Wanagedicht' has been in use in both West and East Germany since the 1960s, referring to contemporary political poems seeking to provoke the reader through the presentation of negative examples. See Erich Fried's volume *Wanagedichte*, Munich, 1964, and Marie-Luise de Wajler-Wilke: 'The Wanagedicht in the work of Günter Kunert: its reception as political poetry', *GDR Monitor*, vol. 14, Winter 1985/6, pp. 14–27.
- 19 Alexander von Bormann (ed.): *Die Erde will ein freies Geleis. Deutsche Naturlyrik aus sechs Jahrhunderten*, Frankfurt/Main, 1984.
- 20 Peter Cornelius Mayer-Tasch (ed.): *Im Gewitter der Geraden. Deutsche Ökolyrik 1950–1980*, Munich, 1981.
- 21 See Mannon Maren-Grisbach: 'Was heißt hier Ökolyrik? Beitrag zu einer zeitgemäßen Literaturkritik', in Lothar Jordan, Axel Marquardt, Winfried Woessler (eds.): *Lyrik — Erlebnis und Kritik. Gedichte und Aufsätze des dritten und vierten Lyrikertreffens in Münster*, Frankfurt/Main, 1988, pp. 264–70; also Hiltrud Grub: 'Die Aufhebung des Naturgedichts in der Lyrik der Gegenwart', in Lothar Jordan, Axel Marquardt, Winfried Woessler (eds.): *Lyrik — von allen Seiten. Gedichte und Aufsätze des ersten Lyrikertreffens in Münster*, Frankfurt/Main, 1981, p. 282.
- 22 See for instance the East German Heinz Czechowski, who writes of his friend Wulf Kirsten's poem 'Lebensspuren': 'Es ist kein "grünes" Gedicht und vermeidet streng das Vokabular des auch bei uns üppig aus dem Boden schießenden "Umweltlyrik" ("Gegen den Strich", *ndf.* vol. 32, no. 12, 1984, p. 88).
- 23 Maren-Grisbach, 'Was heißt hier Ökolyrik?', p. 266. Her use of the term is consciously provocative: 'Ich lasse es provokativ bei dem disparaten und anstößigen Kompositum', p. 264. Mayer-Tasch, one of the first to use the term, is equally conscious of its humorous connotations. His intention, as an outsider in the West German *Kulturbetrieb*, is both ironic and polemical (see his 'Einführung: Ökologische Lyrik als Dokument der Politischen Kultur' to *Im Gewitter der Geraden*, p. 11).
- 24 Since 1982 Ökolyrik has been listed almost annually in the keyword index of Hanns W. Eppeleheimer, Clemens Kötelwesch, Bernhard Kofmann (eds.): *Bibliographie der deutschen Sprach- und Literaturwissenschaft*, Frankfurt/Main, 1957ff., together with 'Umwelt', 'Umweltschutz' and 'Umweltzerstörung'. Corresponding entries in Winfried Bauer et al. (eds.): *Germanistik. Internationales Referatenorgan mit bibliographischen Hinweisen*, Tübingen, 1960ff., have been less frequent.
- 25 See Mayer-Tasch: 'Einführung: Ökologische Lyrik...', pp. 9–26; also the articles 'Ökolyrik. Trauerarbeit im Versmaß', *Natur. Horst Sterns Umweltmagazin*, no. 6, June 1982, pp. 88–92; and 'In schwarzen Spiegeln Flegelbögen. Die ökologische Krise in der Prosa', *Universitas*, no. 9, 1987, pp. 932–46.
- 26 Hubertus Krabe: 'Zweifel an der Industriegesellschaft. Ökologische Kritik in der erzählenden DDR-Literatur' in Redaktion Deutschland Archiv (ed.): *Umweltprobleme und Umweltbewußtsein in der DDR*, Köln, 1985, pp. 201–50.
- 27 Hans-Jürgen Heise: 'Grün, wie ich dich liebe, Grün. Vom Naturgedicht zur Ökolyrik in *Einen Galgen für den Dichter. Stichworte zur Lyrik*, Weingarten, 1986, pp. 74–88.
- 28 Norbert Mecklenburg: 'Naturlyrik und Gesellschaft. Stichworte zu Theorie, Geschichte und Kritik eines poetischen Genres', Harald Hartung: 'Neuere Naturlyrik in der DDR', and Thomas Rottschildt: 'Durchgearbeitete Landschaft. Die Auseinandersetzung mit dem Naturgedicht in einer Gegenwart der zerstörten Natur' in Norbert Mecklenburg (ed.): *Naturlyrik und Gesellschaft*, Stuttgart, 1977, pp. 7–32, 179–97, 198–214.
- 29 David Bathrick: 'Die Zerstörung oder der Anfang der Vernunft? Lyrik und Naturbetrachtung in der DDR' and Ralph Buechler et al.: 'Grauer Alltagsschutz und grüne Lyrik. Zur Naturlyrik in der BRD' in Reinhold Grimm and Jost Hermand (eds.): *Natur und Natürlichkeit. Stationen des Grünen in der deutschen Literatur*, Königstein/Ts., 1981, pp. 150–67, 168–95.

- 30 Haupt: *Natur und Lyrik*, (see note 14), chapter 4: 'Sozialistische Naturlyrik in Ost und West: Versuche', pp. 135—227.
- 31 Peter Rühmkorf: 'Ein Poet mit viel Puste' in *Strömungslehre 1. Poesie*, Reinbek, 1978, p. 94.
- 32 Hans Magnus Enzensberger: 'A Critique of Political Ecology' in *Dreamers of the Absolute. Essays on Politics, Crime and Culture*, London, 1988, p. 276 (= 'Ökologie und Politik oder Die Zukunft der Industrialisierung', *Kursbuch*, no. 33, October 1973, pp. 1—42).
- 33 Sources for texts from the anthologies in notes 15, 16, 18 and 19 above will be quoted as *Thema: Natur. Moderne deutsche Naturlyrik. Die Erde will, und im Gewitter*.
- 34 See reference to poems by Stephan Hermlin and Armin Müller on p. 386.
- 35 Wolfgang Weyrauch is another poet whose work reflects these events. Poems such as 'Gesang um nicht zu sterben' and the curious 'Atom und Aloe', which presents apocalyptic destruction ending in idyllic scenes for the survivors (see Wolfgang Weyrauch: *Atom und Aloe. Gesammelte Gedichte*, ed. by Hans Bender, Frankfurt/Main, 1987, pp. 49f., 68f.), and the moving radio play *Die japanischen Fischer* were written in the mid-1950s.
- 36 Hans Magnus Enzensberger: *Verteidigung der wölfe*, Frankfurt/Main, 1957, pp. 88f.
- 37 Enzensberger: 'A Critique of Political Ecology', p. 295.
- 38 Literary responses to the famous lines: 'Was sind das für Zeiten, wo/ Ein Gespräch über Bäume fast ein Verbrechen ist/ Weil es ein Schweigen über so viele Untaten einschließt' (Bertolt Brecht: *Gesammelte Werke in 20 Bänden*, Frankfurt/Main, vol. IX, p. 723) already included Peter Huchel: 'Der Garten des Theophrast' (1963), Günter Eich: 'Vorsicht' (1966), Erich Fried: 'Gespräch über Bäume' (1967), Paul Celan: 'Ein Blatt' (1971), and Hans Magnus Enzensberger: 'Zwei Fehler' (1971), before ecological concern led writers to make the point with monotonous regularity that 'ein Gespräch über Bäume' now necessarily touched on environmental 'Untaten', and allusion to Brecht's lines became an irritating cliché. See for example Peter Schütt: Bundesrepublik (1971), W.H. Fritz: 'Bäume' (1976), the subtitle of Hans Christoph Buch's collection of environmental texts: *Thema Natur* (1977) and Gregor Laschen: 'Naturgedicht 7' (1979).
- 39 See Walter Mohmann and Peter Schlemmer: *Alte und neue politische Lieder. Entstehung und Gebrauch, Texte und Noten*, Reinbek, 1978, p. 98.
- 40 A further dialect poet with significant environmental involvement was the Low German writer Oswald Andrae, who treats the energy crisis, unemployment and damage to the environment in the provinces through attempts to dispose of chemical and nuclear waste in his 'Brokdorp-Song' and 'Umweltsück'. See Buechler et al.: 'Grauer Alltagschmuzz und grüne Lyrik', pp. 189—91.
- 41 The phrase echoes Adorno ('das beschädigte Leben', from *Minima Moralia*) and has been used by, among others, Ralf Schnell: *Die Literatur der Bundesrepublik Deutschland. Autoren, Geschichte, Literaturbetrieb*, Stuttgart, 1986, p. 314.
- 42 See *Moderne deutsche Naturlyrik*, p. 307, and *Im Gewitter*, p. 20.
- 43 Ursula Heukenkamp, Heinz Kahlu, Wulf Kirsten (eds): *Die eigene Stimme. Lyrik der DDR*, Berlin (GDR), 1988. Though Wulf Kirsten's earlier anthology of GDR nature poetry *Veränderte Landschaft* (Leipzig, 1979) contains a number of environmental poems, East German *Umweltlyrik* is better represented in the later volume. I understand the East Berlin poet Richard Pietraß has been preparing a new anthology of GDR environmental poetry; one hopes this will not fall victim to changing political circumstances. The recent special number of *ndf* on the environment (vol. 37, no. 11, 1989), which includes poems by Peter Gosse, Thomas Rosenlöcher, Rolf Richter, Erhard Scherner, Reimar Gilsenbach and Wolfgang Brockel together with essays and prose contributions by Juri Brezan, Joachim Nowotny, Matthias Kömer, Heinz Kahlu, Juri Koch and others, seems likely to mark the culmination of GDR-specific literary treatment of environmental issues.
- 44 Two powerful poems from the same volume curiously passed over in anthologies are 'An taube Ohren der Geschichte', which relates the devastation of North Africa after the fall of Carthage, and man's inability to learn from such destruction, and 'Psalm', with which the volume ends, which must surely refer to man's self-destruction through nuclear war: 'Daß aus dem Samen des Menschen/ Kein Mensch/ Und aus dem Samen des Oibaus/ Kein Oibaum/ Werde./ Es ist zu messen/ Mit der Elle des Todes./ Die da wohnen/ Unter der Erde/ In einer Kugel aus Zement./ Ihre Stärke gleich/ Dem Halm/ Im

- peitschenden Schnee./ Die Öde wird Geschichte./ Termien schreiben sie/ Mit ihren Zangen/ In den Sand./ Und nicht erforscht wird werden/ Ein Geschlecht./ Eifrig bemüht/ Sich zu vernichten.' (*Chausseen Chausseen*, Frankfurt, 1963, pp. 77 and 84).
- 45 *Forum*, vol. 20, no. 10, 1966, p. 23. Quoted in Batrick: 'Die Zerstörung oder...', p. 150.
- 46 See Günter Kunert: *Verkündigung des Welters*, München, 1966, pp. 7f.
- 47 See Haupt: *Natur und Lyrik*, pp. 201f., 217. Kunert's views on the future of society are closer to Adorno and Horkheimer's argument that the enlightenment has come to counter emancipation (in *Dialektik der Aufklärung* (1947)) than to Bloch's or Marcuse's optimism regarding a reconciliation of man and nature through a benevolent technology.
- 48 Poems from this volume (Berlin, 1965) such as Sarah Kirsch's 'Der Saurier', in which the fate of the dinosaur serves as a warning example for man, and Rainer Kirsch's 'Gespräch mit dem Saurier', which calls on man to turn away from Erfindungen, Technik, Verbrauch, Atomstrahlung, Mutation, also 'Bootstahl' or 'Markgang', which refer to the problems of pollution and destruction of the landscape, albeit ending on an optimistic note, have not, to my knowledge, since been reprinted.
- 49 Subsequent environmental poems by Sarah Kirsch include 'Beginn der Zerstörung', 'Die Ebene', 'Ende des Jahres', 'Sommerabend' and 'Valei', from the volume *Erdreich*, Stuttgart, 1982.
- 50 See Knabe: 'Zweifel an der Industriegesellschaft', p. 204. Relevant passages in *Der geteilte Himmel* include 'dieses verfluchte Wasser, das nach Chemie stank, seit sie denken konnten' on the opening page, 'Jedes Kind konnte hier die Richtung des Windes nach dem vorherrschenden Geruch bestimmen: Chemie oder Malzkaffee oder Braunkohle. Über allem diese Dunstglocke, Industrieabgase, die sich schwer atmen', 'das zerstreute, durch Dreck und Ruß gefüllte Licht', 'der [Fluß] war [...] nützlich und unfreundlicher geworden: er führte wätereißenen Schaum mit sich, der über roch und vom Chemiewerk bis weit hinter die Stadt den Fisch vergiftete', and 'Teppiche muß man hier jeden Tag absaugen, sie verstauben unglaublich' (Munich, 16th edn, 1983, pp. 7, 27f., 78).
- 51 See Knabe: 'Zweifel an der Industriegesellschaft', p. 205.
- 52 Czechoslovak's consciousness of the ambivalent potential of science, esp. nuclear technology, leads him to a position of active engagement, presumably against their abuse, in 'Reisen', from the same volume: 'Die Wolke. Der Regen. Die Fruchtbarkeit./ Die fruchtbare Wissenschaft./ Die Wolke. Der Regen. Die Fruchtbarkeit./ Die fruchtbare Wissenschaft./ Die Natur unterm Grauen der Mutationen. [...] Im Netz der Bilder/ Entsteht der Gedanke./ Klärt sich und fornt sich./ Tätig sein.' (*Wasserfahrt*, Halle/Saale, 1967, pp. 122f.) See Ian Hilton, pp. 401—11 below, for an analysis of Czechoslovak's nature poetry.
- 53 See Volker Braun: *Wir und nicht sie*, Frankfurt/Main, 1970, pp. 9f., 14, 15.
- 54 For instance Volker Braun: 'Das Vogtland' or 'Die Industrie', in *Wir und nicht sie*, pp. 12f., and *Gegen die symmetrische Welt*, Frankfurt/Main, 1974, pp. 23—5.
- 55 Hartung: 'Neuere Naturlyrik in der DDR', (see note 28), p. 196. Hartung is admittedly discussing GDR poetry, and Günter Kunert in particular.
- 56 My information on GDR environmental problems and the public debate on them is based on articles by Cord Schwartzau, Andreas Kurjo, Werner Grün, Gerhard Timm, Peter Wensierski and Hubertus Knabe in *Fedaktion Deutschland Archiv: Umweltprobleme und Umweltbewußtsein in der DDR*, (see note 25), and on Anita Mallinckrodt: *The Environmental Dialogue in the GDR. Literature, Church, Party and Interest Groups in Their Socio-Political Context. A Research Concept and Case Study*, Lanham, Maryland, 1987.
- 57 See Mallinckrodt: *The Environmental Dialogue in the GDR*, p. 32.
- 58 Erwin Strittmatter mentioned pollution in an interview with Heinz Plavus ('Produktivkraft Poesie') in *ndf*, vol. 21, no. 5, 1973, p. 6; in the same year Brezan spoke at a German-Soviet writers' colloquium of man's impoverishment through technology ('Geschichten von Menschen in der Menschenwelt', *ndf*, vol. 22, no. 4, 1974, pp. 20f.), and the Postock professor of German Literature Joseph Pischel included reference to ecological dangers and alienation in a cautious but balanced paper: 'Das Verhältnis Mensch-Natur in der Selbstverständigung von Schriftstellern der DDR', (*Weimarer Beiträge*, 1976, no. 1, pp. 74—99), quoting Brezan extensively and referring to Strittmatter and a speech by Franz Fühmann at the seventh Writers' Union Congress in 1973.

- 59 Günter Kunert: 'Anläßlich Flittos: Ein Briefwechsel zwischen Günter Kunert und Wilhelm Girtius', *Sinn und Form*, vol. 31, no. 4, 1979, pp. 850—3. This was however followed by a sharp rebuff by Girtius in the same issue.
- 60 Anita Mallinckrodt: 'Environmental Dialogue in the GDR. The Literary Challenge to the Sanctity of "Progress"', *GDR Monitor*, vol. 16, Winter 1986/87, pp. 1—26; here p. 20. See also the chapter 'Case Study: Hanns Cibulka's *Swallow*' in Mallinckrodt: *The Environmental Dialogue in the GDR*.
- 61 For bibliographical details and more detailed discussion of the treatment of environmental issues in GDR prose again see Knabe: 'Zweifel an der Industriegesellschaft', esp. pp. 216—8, and Mallinckrodt: *The Environmental Dialogue in the GDR*, p. 90.
- 62 See Wolfgang Ertl: 'Sintflut und Apokalypse: Überlegungen zur Umweltlyrik in der DDR und BRD' in Ingrid K.J. Williams (ed.): *GDR: Individual and Society. Conference Proceedings of the International Conference on the GDR*, Ealing College of Higher Education, 1987, pp. 79—90; also his 'Ökolyrik in der DDR: Eine Beispielsreihe', in Margy Gerber et al. (eds): *Studies in GDR Culture and Society* 5, Lanham, 1985, pp. 221—35.
- 63 Ursula Heukenkamp: 'Landschaften. Anmerkungen zu einer Lyrik-Antiologie', *Zeitschrift für Germanistik*, no. 3, 1980, p. 339.
- 64 Ursula Heukenkamp: 'Der Abschied von der schönen Natur. Natur in der DDR-Lyrik und ihre Veränderung' in Hans Kaufmann (ed.): *Tendenzen und Beispiele. Zur DDR-Literatur in den siebziger Jahren*, Leipzig, 1981, pp. 221—60; here pp. 256, 249, 255.
- 65 Klaus Schulmann: 'Lageberichte zur ökologischen Situation — Beobachtungen zur Lyrik der 80er Jahre in DDR-Literatur 85 im Gespräch', Berlin(GDR), p. 23.
- 66 Katrin Kohl, pp. 345—6 above, also discusses this poem.
- 67 See Ian Hilton, pp. 404 and 406 below, for further comment on this poem.
- 68 See also pp. 382—3, 388 and 392 above. For information on the dramatist and prose writer Juri Koch see Peter Barker: 'Interview with Juri Koch', *GDR Monitor*, vol. 21, Summer 1989, pp. 49—58. See also Helfried W. Seiger (ed.): *Der Begriff Heimat in der deutschen Gegenwartsliteratur*, Munich, 1987. Ian Hilton, p. 401 below, describes Heinz Czechowski as a *Heimatdichter*.
- 69 Presumably in the dtv paperback edition (see note 10). See Wulf Kirsten: 'Selbstauskunft. Interview mit Peter Hammi', in Bernhard Rübenach (ed.): *Peter-Huchel-Preis. Ein Jahrbuch. 1987. Wulf Kirsten. Texte. Dokumente. Materialien*, Moos, 1987, p. 48: 'Ich war sehr, sehr lange blauäugig, habe eine heile Welt in mir herumgetragen, habe überall nur helle Welt gesehen. Erst 1969/70 wurde ich auf das Buch *Der stumme Frühling* von Rachel Carson hingewiesen, das ich mir besorgt und mit glühenden Ohren gelesen habe. Da erst habe ich angefangen, mich um diese Dinge zu kümmern [...] Das Umdenken begann ziemlich rapid, ich habe mein Bewußtsein geschärft, habe die Welt mit anderen Augen gesehen, habe sie dann daraufhin auch beobachtet.'
- 69 *Aufbaupessimismus*: faith in technology, in the historical context of the postwar socialist reconstruction period in the GDR (1950s and early 1960s). *Fortschrittspessimismus*: disbelief in (technical and social) progress, or historical pessimism, common in the mid 1970s. On the relative merits of FRG and GDR environmental poetry see Hiltrud Gäng: 'Die Aufhebung des Naturgedichts in der Lyrik der Gegenwart' in Jordan, Marquardt, Woester: *Lyrik — von allen Seiten...* (see note 20), pp. 264—83, and the final chapter in Volkmann: *Zeit der Kirschen?*... (see note 14), pp. 227—48.
- 70 Reinhard Opitz speaks of 'eine Dominanz von Fragestellungen menschheitsgeschichtlichen Ausmaßes' in contemporary GDR writing and the moral search for a future perspective for man in general, including environmental questions and the destructive potential of arms and new technologies as well as individual alienation through social and economic pressures. *Zeitschrift für deutsche Philosophie*, no. 9, 1985, p. 840. See Eckart Förtsch: 'Fragen menschheitsgeschichtlichen Ausmaßes. Wissenschaft, Technik, Umwelt', in Gisela Heiwig (ed.): *Die DDR-Gesellschaft im Spiegel ihrer Literatur*, Köln, 1986, pp. 85—112.