

## "Ich bin parteilich, subjektiv und emotional"

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## Chapter 4. 'Ich bin parteilich, subjektiv und emotional': *Eigensinn* and the Narrative

### (Re)construction of Political Agency in Inge Viett's *Nie war ich furchtloser*

Katharina Karcher

It is easy to present Inge Viett's life as a story of violence, ideological illusions and political defeats. Born in 1944 into extreme poverty, she experienced neglect and abuse in the West German foster care system. In the early 1970s, she joined the armed leftist group 'Movement of June Second' (MJ2), which failed to win popular support. In the course of the 1970s, she was involved in two abductions and a range of other violent attacks. After the dissolution of the MJ2 in 1980, Inge Viett joined the 'Red Army Faction' (RAF) to continue her armed struggle against the West German state. Whilst working for the RAF in Paris, she was caught in a traffic control, which led to her shooting a police officer, who survived paralysed. To avoid arrest, Viett went into hiding in East Germany in the early 1980s and became a fervent supporter of state socialism at a point in time when the German Democratic Republic (GDR) was at the brink of collapse. Shortly after reunification, Viett was arrested in Magdeburg. Up to this day, she publicly defends the social and political values of the GDR. An article in the lifestyle magazine *Tempo* from the early 1990s described her as 'a freedom fighter, who took the liberty to deprive others of their freedom, and who was happy in a country that wasn't free. A communist who remained committed to communism although it had clearly failed'.<sup>1</sup> Viett has rejected this reading of her life and has published an autobiography that she considers to be a 'piece of authentic counterhistory'.<sup>2</sup>

In August 1992, the Higher Regional Court of Koblenz sentenced Inge Viett to thirteen years in prison.<sup>3</sup> She experienced the prison system as a machine that threatened to destroy her

sense of self by imposing its space, concept of time and hierarchical authority onto her. In this situation, life writing became both a survival strategy and a way of constructing and defending a sense of political agency. While in prison, Viêt wrote two books and further publications followed after her imprisonment.<sup>4</sup> In an interview that she gave shortly after her early release in January 1997, she claimed that writing had helped her to come to terms with the past and to cope with the overwhelming emptiness of prison.<sup>5</sup> Viêt's openly 'biased, subjective and emotional'<sup>6</sup> account of her life can be read as a radical act of self-affirmation in a hostile environment and as a manifestation of *Eigensinn*. According to Alf Lüdtke, *Eigensinn*, which is commonly used to refer to a stubborn insistence on an opinion, can be a creative 'act of (re)appropriating alienated social relations' and of developing a sense of self and meaning in an environment characterized by significant power asymmetries.<sup>7</sup> Yet, *Alltagsgeschichte*, as practiced by Lüdtke and other historians, has shown that *Eigensinn* should not simply be equated with resistance against prevailing powers. Rather, it can be understood as a dynamic process of relating to the world that challenges 'the pattern of thought of one-dimensional bipolarity'.<sup>8</sup> To explore the dynamics and contradictions in Viêt's ideas, actions, and narrative, we need to avoid judging her based on dichotomies such as resistance/political conformism and ethical behaviour/immoral conduct that feature prominently in Viêt's autobiography and in previous research on political prison writing.

In his analysis of South African political prison writing in the apartheid era, Paul Gready argues that prison writing can function as a means of self-empowerment and as a form of political resistance.<sup>9</sup> His analysis shows that autobiography 'is one of a series of weapons which although potentially available to use to undermine the prisoner ... is primarily a weapon of redress, a means of reducing pain and returning power to the prisoner'.<sup>10</sup> Gready's study focuses on the accounts of political activists who were part of a broad struggle against a system of

institutionalized racism and oppression. While these men and women are commonly understood as political prisoners, it is disputed whether this label can and should be applied to Viett and other members of armed leftist groups in West Germany. According to Kim Richmond, a political prisoner can be defined as one ‘who has been charged with crimes pertaining to his or her political beliefs or activities’.<sup>11</sup> In her recent study *Women Political Prisoners in Germany: Narratives of Self and Captivity, 1915-91*, Richmond does not consider self-representations by Viett or other members of armed leftist groups in West Germany, because she refuses to see their ‘violent, dangerous actions’ as political.<sup>12</sup>

The aim of this essay is not to assess whether Viett is morally entitled to claim that she is a revolutionary and/or political prisoner. Rather it discusses her narrative as a means to gain control over her experience and to (re)create a sense of self and meaning against the background of the changing political landscape of post-war Germany. Whether she succeeded in conveying this image to her readership is another question. I agree with Richmond that there is a negotiation between how writers see themselves and how their readers see them.<sup>13</sup> Viett knows that many people consider her a terrorist. Despite or because of her public image, she claims the right to tell the story of her life as she experienced it.<sup>14</sup> Rather than trying to overcome the distance between her and her readers, Viett wants to confront them with a different perspective.

This chapter in Viett’s autobiography *Nie war ich furchtloser* is based on *Anteilnahme* (empathy)—an affirmative yet critical involvement with her narrative. *Anteilnehmen*, as discussed by Lüdtke, ‘does not aim at a naïve “nestling up” to the subject. Rather, what it facilitates is greater awareness of the shape of that *distance* separating “them” from “us”’.<sup>15</sup> As a political dissident, who has been involved in attacks that have hurt and killed people, Viett wrote her autobiography at least in part to explain and justify her actions. Although it is thus crucial not

to mistake her subjective constantly evolving sense of authenticity for factual accuracy, Viett's narrative offers fascinating insights into the ways in which she constructed herself as a historical agent in a divided country and how she made sense of the reunification process. Throughout the book, Viett emphasizes her opposition to the Federal Republic of Germany (FRG). The FRG, as she understands it, is the product of a 'history of lost revolutions and repressed resistance' and a fascist, imperialist and authoritarian state.<sup>16</sup> By writing herself into the history of an ongoing revolutionary struggle against fascism and for a socialist society, Viett gave meaning to her life and imprisonment.

In her book *Terror and Democracy*, Karrin Hanshew argues that the left-wing political violence carried out by Viett and others was a 'litmus test for German democracy, where the responses of the state and populace were taken as evidence for the lessons West Germans had or had not learned from the past'.<sup>17</sup> While this is a widely accepted position, scholars come to different conclusions regarding the legitimacy and appropriateness of the state response to this perceived threat. According to Hanshew, the confrontation between the West German state and the RAF and other militant leftist groups led to a normalisation of resistance to antidemocratic forces and established the state as a 'militant democracy' (*wehrhafte Demokratie*) —literally a democracy that can defend itself. Donatella Della Porta, by contrast, argues that political violence in the FRG was at least in part triggered by the reluctance of the existing political elite to integrate demands for reform. She criticizes that state repression in the FRG 'created martyrs and myths' and contributed significantly to the radicalisation of left-wing radicals such as Inge Viett.<sup>18</sup> As Viett's case shows, radical protest and political violence against the West German state cannot be examined in isolation from the GDR, because it led to alliances and divisions beyond the German-German border.

### *Rewriting a Traumatic Childhood*

Inge Viett was born in Stemwarde in Schleswig-Holstein. In her autobiography, she notes that her entire knowledge about her early childhood stems from police reports.<sup>19</sup> Apparently, Viett's mother gravely neglected her seven children and lost custody of them shortly after the war. A report by the Federal Criminal Police Office from the late 1970s describes Viett's early childhood in drastic terms: 'Viett was born into dreadful circumstances. The mother is described as a slut. After two years of neglect by her mother, Viett is put into care and given to foster parents in 1950'.<sup>20</sup> The report does not mention a father or any other family members. After spending four years in an orphanage, Inge Viett was adopted by a foster family in a small village in Schleswig-Holstein. Here, she experienced repeated abuse and an attempted rape by a local resident.<sup>21</sup> After she managed to avoid him and fight him off on numerous occasions, the man tried to rape her in the moorlands. The only reason why he let her go eventually was, according to Viett, that she whispered: 'We're drowning'.<sup>22</sup> Rather than stating an objective truth or being a deceptive manoeuvre, this claim was a genuine expression of Viett's subjective experience and her *Eigensinn*. During the attempted rape, she could hear the gurgling sound of the muddy swamp water and felt that she was sinking into the earth, even though she realized soon afterwards that the ground was perfectly stable.<sup>23</sup>

At the age of fourteen, Viett fell in love with a female teacher. Although she mentions on several occasions that she feels attracted to women, her sexual identity plays a minor role in her narrative. In Viett's autobiography, lesbianism is not an 'exclusive and continuous ground of identity and politics'.<sup>24</sup> Rather, it seems that the author's sexual orientation was one of many reasons why she felt different from her peers and why she rejected a conventional life style. As

soon as she was old enough, Viett ran away from her foster family.<sup>25</sup> After completing her basic education at a school, with a focus on domestic science, she studied to become a gymnastics teacher. She left college without a degree. In the following years, she worked as a stripper, courier, maid and in a range of other jobs in different cities in West Germany.<sup>26</sup>

There can be no doubt that Viett's belief in the socialist project has helped her to come to terms with the neglect, violence and discrimination that she had experienced in her childhood and adolescence. Although she has never tried to find her mother, Viett emphasizes that she holds no grudge against the woman 'who had to give birth to seven children that she could not protect and love'.<sup>27</sup> Retrospectively, she sees her mother as a victim of a class-based society shaped by fascist ideology, and she claims that the people in the village where her foster family lived were influenced by the same worldview. Apparently, villagers greeted each other with 'Heil Hitler' and the recent past was a taboo topic in the local school.<sup>28</sup> According to Viett, the fascist ideology in the village led to a hatred against everything and everyone different.<sup>29</sup> Since she was different from other children in the village, Inge Viett experienced discrimination and violent attacks. By presenting herself as a victim of the fascist ideologies that have led to the Holocaust, Viett aligns herself with the victims of the Nazi regime and distances herself from the generation of perpetrators and followers.

Viett's narrative suggests that she understood the full extent of the problem of *Vergangenheitsbewältigung* in the Federal Republic only after spending some time in the GDR. In the early 1980s, she and other RAF members spent several weeks in the GDR to receive military training. As part of a 'political education' programme for the participants in this training, Stasi officers organized a guided tour at Buchenwald concentration camp. Viett describes the trip to this 'place of horror' (*Stätte des Grauens*) as a deeply upsetting and eye-

opening experience. She notes that she was appalled to see ‘with how much cowardice and deception’ the generation of her parents in the FRG had ‘covered the stinking morass of the past with a volcanic eruption of consumption’.<sup>30</sup> Here and elsewhere in the book, Viett establishes a strong link between fascism and capitalism, which enables her to portray the self-declared antifascist and anti-capitalist GDR as the better German state. Apparently, she and her comrades felt overwhelmed by a sense of shame and guilt after their trip to Buchenwald—feelings which their hosts found difficult to understand. Viett reasons that this can be explained by the fact that people in the GDR were living in a different history.<sup>31</sup> In more than one way, Viett’s autobiography can be read as an attempt to write herself into this different history.

#### *Politicisation and Radicalisation in West Berlin*

Although Viett mentions the ‘Easter Marches’ against Nuclear Weapons and other West German protest movements in the early and mid-1960s, she openly admits that she took little notice of these groups. While many young people in West Berlin and other University cities took to the streets, Viett showed no interest in politics.<sup>32</sup> This changed in 1968, when she left her partner in Wiesbaden and quit her job. Attracted by the vibrant student culture and the subcultural scene in West Berlin, she moved into one of the first communes in Kreuzberg. The house was located close to the Berlin Wall, where rents were particularly low. At this point in time, Viett had no desire to explore the world on the other side of the wall. Retrospectively, she criticizes that the ‘blurred mosaic picture’ (*verschwommenes Mosaikbild*) of East Germany that she and other young people in West Germany had based on bias rather than a real engagement with the GDR.<sup>33</sup>



In the 1960s, West Berlin was a hotbed of student protests and a hub of countercultural activity. Initially, Viett showed little interest in the theory and politics of the New Left in West Berlin. Rather than discussing revolutionary violence in the 'Republikanische Club', as Rudi Dutschke and other student activists did, she experimented with drugs and alternative forms of living. In this period, the names of the people who inspired her were thus not Herbert Marcuse and Frantz Fanon but countercultural icons such as the actor Magdalena Montezuma and the film maker and gay rights activist Rosa von Praunheim. In her autobiography, Viett describes her commune in Kreuzberg as follows:

This was the place where men and women met to discuss the newest exciting events in the 'political scene', smoke good pot, listen to records, drink Chinese tea, maybe to take some LSD, or simply to show off a little—to be hip—when the conversation turned to Andy Warhol or the 'Kommune 1', or Che Guevara, or Ravi Shankar.<sup>34</sup>

Viett identified with a part of the subcultural scene in West Berlin that became known as the 'Berlin Underground'. According to Anja Schwanhäuß, the Berlin Underground was a broad cultural movement in the 1960s and 1970s, whose followers rejected the traditional bourgeois norms and experimented with a range of alternative lifestyles.<sup>35</sup> Even if there were numerous intersections and overlaps between the Berlin Underground and the student movement, the two subcultures should be distinguished for three reasons. First, the lifestyle of most students at the time differed considerably from that of the individuals and groups associated with the Berlin Underground. Only parts of the antiauthoritarian wing in the student movement led similarly unconventional lives as many people in the drug scene, the '*Gammler*' movement or in

the first communes.<sup>36</sup> Second, groups in the Berlin Underground tended to be less intensely intellectual and more accessible to young people from lower class backgrounds than many student organisations.<sup>37</sup> Third, similar to other hedonistic youth-subcultures in the 1950s and early 1960s, the individuals and groups associated with the Berlin Underground had—at least initially—no political agenda. Rather, the young people in this diverse subcultural scene shared a desire to experience a life outside existing social norms and constraints.

Viett's narrative suggests that her politicisation in the late 1960s was not the result of intellectual analyses but of specific bodily experiences and social perceptions. A road trip to Northern Africa left a lasting impression on her. Viett notes that she had seen poverty and exploitation in Germany, but she was horrified by the extent of suffering in Third World countries. She writes: 'What I saw on this and other trips to disadvantaged, pillaged and colonized parts of the world was the result of centuries of the predatory lust for property and power in the "civilized" Western world'.<sup>38</sup> Viett claims that after her trip to Northern Africa she read Fanon and understood immediately what he meant.<sup>39</sup> Like many student activists, she came to the conclusion that oppressed people in the Third World were left with no alternative but to use violence to fight against colonial oppression. After her return to West Berlin, she felt appalled by the consumerism in West Germany. She began to avoid shopping malls and avenues with luxury shops in West Berlin, and gave away antique furniture and other personal property.

In the late 1960s, West Berlin became a hotbed of leftist political violence. In this period, Viett and others in the Berlin Underground began to 'fight back' against police brutality during drug raids.<sup>40</sup> Initially, their activities limited themselves to vandalism, arson and bombings directed against property.<sup>41</sup> Viett and her friends smashed the windows of porn shops, carried out arson attacks against the cars of Springer employees and tried to defend squatted social centres

with Molotov cocktails.<sup>42</sup> As Klaus Weinbauer highlights, the recourse to violence in the Berlin Underground was mostly spontaneous and defensive, but some of the actors involved radicalized further and turned to more organized forms of violence.<sup>43</sup>

In 1969, a loose network of occupants and visitors of two radical leftist communes in West Berlin formed the militant groups 'Hash-Rebels' and the 'Tupamaros West-Berlin' (TW). Both groups are direct predecessors of the Movement of June Second, which Viêt joined in 1972. In February 1969, more than a year before the RAF committed its first attack, members of the TW made plans to kill U.S. president Richard Nixon during a visit to West Berlin.<sup>44</sup> On 9 November in the same year, they planted a bomb in a Jewish community centre.<sup>45</sup> Although these and other attacks in the late 1960s did not claim any lives, they illustrate that some groups in the Berlin Underground no longer shied away from violence against people.

While members of the Berlin Underground formed the first militant leftist group in the FRG, the first armed attack in West Berlin was carried out by a group led by former student activists. In May 1970, the student Gudrun Ensslin, the lawyer Horst Mahler, the journalist Ulrike Meinhof and several other people liberated Andreas Baader by force of arms from prison in West Berlin and founded the Red Army Faction (RAF). As the name indicates, the group wanted to form the military wing of a not yet existing communist party. The RAF understood itself as an avant-garde expediting a revolution, which it expected to be carried out by the working class and other oppressed groups all over the globe. Due to their ideology and theoretical background, the founding members of the RAF quickly earned the reputation of 'Leninists with guns'.<sup>46</sup> Soon, the group realized that their attacks mobilized masses neither in West Germany nor in the Third World. Facing a lack of support by the working class, the RAF drew on theories of revolution that did not make proletarian participation a precondition. The

group found this theoretical framework in the ‘foco theories’<sup>47</sup> proposed by Che Guevara, Fidel Castro and Régis Debray. According to this theoretical framework, the support of the masses was no longer a crucial precondition for an armed struggle.

Initially, the founding members of the RAF hoped that the enemy of their enemy would be their friend. Shortly after the RAF’s formation in 1970, founding member Meinhof urged GDR authorities to support the group’s armed struggle. While Stasi officials allowed RAF members to use the GDR as a transit country, they rejected the group’s request to plan attacks from East Germany. Previous research suggests that this decision was as much the result of diplomatic considerations as of political disagreements.<sup>48</sup> The RAF’s ideological stance deviated from the Marxist-Leninist position of GDR authorities. Amongst other things, Stasi officials criticized that the RAF pursued a strategy of ‘individual terror’ and disapproved of the fact that the group had abandoned the notion of the working class as the revolutionary subject. Despite these ideological differences, the Stasi did not only tolerate but actively support armed leftist groups in West Germany. According to Martin Jander, this can be attributed to the fact that they had common enemies: the Federal Republic of Germany and its allies, in particular the United States.<sup>49</sup> As Jander highlights, the RAF and the Stasi even used similar terms to describe these enemies: fascism, imperialism and predatory capitalism. These four concepts feature prominently in Viett’s narrative and provide a link between her life as an urban guerrilla fighter in West Berlin, her exile in the GDR and her imprisonment and political activism in the postreunification period.

Although Viett and others in the Berlin Underground shared the RAF’s anti-imperialist, antifascist and anti-capitalist stance, they rejected the vanguardist position of the RAF. In January 1972, some of the remaining TW and several other small militant leftist groups in the

Berlin Underground founded the MJ2 as a militant alternative to the RAF. Most group members identified as anarchists, at least in a broad sense of the term, others as Stalinists, but all were clearly more interested in practising the armed struggle than theorising about it. They wanted to be a 'fun guerrilla' and hoped to mobilize revolutionary forces in the working class by adopting a more populist line than the RAF. Also, the internal structure of the group differed from that of the RAF. The RAF was a hierarchical and centralist organisation and, after Baader's rescue in 1970, operated almost entirely underground. The founding members of the MJ2, in contrast, wanted to avoid going underground for as long as possible. Moreover, they aimed to create a less hierarchical, horizontally connected network of local groups.<sup>50</sup>

Viett joined the MJ2 soon after its formation in 1972. One of her first tasks for the group was to help carry out a series of attacks against the British yachting club in Berlin against two cars belonging to the Allied forces. The attacks were a rather spontaneous and ill-prepared response to the events during Bloody Sunday on 30 January in Northern Ireland.<sup>51</sup> One civilian died whilst trying to deactivate one of the explosive devices. To avoid arrest, the actors involved in the attacks went underground. In the course of the 1970s, Viett was involved in two abductions and a range of other violent attacks. Stasi officials took a similar stance to the MJ2 as to the RAF: although they distanced themselves from the group's approach,<sup>52</sup> they allowed group members to use the GDR as a country of transit.<sup>53</sup>

Until the dissolution of the MJ2 in 1980, Viett was a driving force in the group. Although she lived in the constant fear of arrest, Viett experienced this period of her life as liberating and fulfilling:

At no point in my life have I been less scared than during this time in the underground, a place which allowed me a new, different existence outside of the ugly world. I have never been freer, never been less tied to my own responsibility than in this state of complete detachment from state authority and from social norms.<sup>54</sup>

According to Viett, her involvement in the Berlin Underground and in the MJ2 opened the door to a utopian social space that was free from authoritarian structures and oppressive gender norms.

While Viett and other women in the MJ2 wanted to be equal to their male comrades in every regard, they did not identify as feminists. In an interview in 1997, she stressed this point clearly: 'None of us had a background in the feminist scene ... We did not deliberately choose to go through a process of liberation as women ... We simply made a decision and then we fought and did the same things as men. For us, that was no man-woman question. Underground, the old role models were irrelevant to us'.<sup>55</sup> Although Viett distances herself from feminism, her narrative can be read as an attempt to write herself into a history of revolutionary women.<sup>56</sup> Interesting in this context is how she compensated for a lack of female role models in her own life by creating narrative links to Rosa Luxemburg and to women partisans. The way in which Viett describes one of her guns in her autobiography illustrates this point: 'Maybe this gun had once protected a woman partisan. It was an excellent fit for a woman's hand. I cherished it like a precious heirloom'.<sup>57</sup> This imagined bond with revolutionary women is another manifestation of her won imagination. It allowed Viett to develop and maintain a sense of political agency and historical continuity that was radically different from those of most other women of her generation.

Even in their utopian clandestine world, the members of the MJ2 could not escape the quickly changing political reality in the FRG. In the late 1970s, political differences among group members became an increasing source of tension. The trigger for the internal conflict was a falling-out over the events during the ‘German Autumn’<sup>58</sup> in 1977. In an interview in 1978, some members of the MJ2 openly criticized the hijacking of an airplane in October 1977 and other RAF attacks during the German Autumn as ‘anti-grass roots’ (*volksfeindlich*).<sup>59</sup> They defended the idea of the ‘fun guerrilla’ (*Spaßguerilla*) and insisted that the armed struggle in West Germany could succeed only with humour and provocation. Inge Viett and other group members, by contrast, criticized a lack of seriousness in the group. They formed the ‘internationalist wing’ of the MJ2, which gravitated increasingly towards the course of the RAF. The internal discord in the MJ2 reached a peak in June 1980, when a part of the group declared the end of the MJ2, and Viett and a few others joined the RAF.

### *Reconfiguring a Revolutionary Identity in the GDR*

Throughout the 1970s, the Stasi had followed the activities of the MJ2 and other armed leftist groups in the FRG closely. Archived interview transcripts suggest that state authorities in the GDR had been aware of Viett’s involvement in the MJ2 at least since November 1973, when MJ2 founding member Michael Baumann had provided Stasi officers with detailed information about her and other group members.<sup>60</sup> Viett’s narrative suggests that she and other members of armed leftist groups in West Germany used the GDR as a transit country without caring much about its culture and people.<sup>61</sup> On one occasion, she was stopped by GDR border guards and interrogated by a Stasi officer. Apparently, her interrogator ‘Harry’ welcomed her as a ‘comrade’. According to Viett, he emphasized that, whilst rejecting terrorist tactics, the GDR had

no intention to betray her and her fellow fighters to the common enemy.<sup>62</sup> One of the most striking features of Viëtt's narrative is her portrayal of her interactions with the State Ministry for State Security. Since she has only good things to say about the Stasi and provides no critical details about her agreements with East German state authorities, Viëtt has repeatedly been accused of being a Stasi collaborator.<sup>63</sup>

In May 1978, Viëtt and other MJ2 members liberated a fellow group member from prison in West Berlin. Like on other occasions, the group managed to escape via East Berlin. When trying to travel to Czechoslovakia, they were arrested in Bulgaria, and Viëtt had to make use of her connections to the Stasi to avoid extradition to West Germany.<sup>64</sup> Despite her increasingly close collaboration with the Stasi, Viëtt stresses that she remained sceptical of secret services in socialist states, because she considered them as 'obscure and unpredictable' as their Western counterparts.<sup>65</sup> The facts tell a different tale: in the following years, Viëtt acted as a key link between the Stasi and the militant Left in West Germany. Soon after joining the RAF in 1980, she acted as a mediator when eight fellow fighters wanted to lay down their arms and make a fresh start in the GDR.<sup>66</sup> While Stasi officials rejected requests for direct financial support, they agreed to provide military training for Viëtt and other RAF members in the GDR.

A few months after participating in this training, Viëtt told the Stasi officials that she, too, wanted to make a fresh start in East Germany. It is difficult to assess whether this decision was primarily the result of the growing isolation of the militant Left and of an existential crisis triggered by the shooting of the police officer in Paris, as her narrative suggests, or whether there were other factors at play.<sup>67</sup> To prepare for her new life, Viëtt had to participate in a Stasi training. Here she learned to speak like GDR citizens and worked her way through a local library: 'GDR literature, socialist history, socialist economics, poetry'.<sup>68</sup> Despite all of her



efforts, she found it difficult to familiarize herself with culture and everyday language in the GDR. Small mistakes and misunderstandings were tell-tale signs of her background in the FRG. She used the term *Supermarkt* (supermarket) rather than *Kaufhalle* (shopping hall), she struggled with abbreviations that were obvious to GDR citizens and she found it difficult to relate to the concerns and aspirations of people who had grown up in the GDR.

One of the first things that Viett noticed in East Germany was the constant presence of political banners and slogans. She recalls seeing slogans such as ‘I am a worker, but who is more?’ and ‘Build socialism’ on walls and signboards in the GDR.<sup>69</sup> Unlike many other people, Viett found this state propaganda straightforward and convincing. Not without reason, she argues that many Western critics of the GDR would conveniently ignore the ideologically charged nature of public spaces in Western world, which manifested itself in ubiquitous advertising campaigns, the commercialization of everyday life and in the privatization of the public sector.<sup>70</sup> According to Viett, the crucial difference between political propaganda in the FRG and in East Germany was that the former promoted consumerism while the latter endorsed humanitarian values.

After months of intensive preparation by the Stasi, Viett moved to a small flat in a *Neubaugebiet* (new development) in Dresden. Here, she introduced herself as Eva Maria Sommer—a 40-year-old woman from West Germany who had moved to the GDR from West Germany because she considered it a better political system. Although she tried to adapt to her environment in Dresden, Viett never managed to allay the mistrust of her neighbours and colleagues. Her life narrative met with incomprehension, and she found it difficult to make friends. Unlike Susanne Albrecht and other former RAF members who had gone into hiding in the GDR, Viett refused to marry and did not want to have a family. This position distinguished

her from most of her co-workers in Dresden, who she describes as ‘typical GDR women: qualified, married, one child, facing a double burden’.<sup>71</sup> In a recent study of German gender politics, Myra Marx Ferree emphasizes that ‘[a] woman in the GDR had been defined as a “worker-mother” who was a full-time employee as well as responsible for children and housework’.<sup>72</sup> The norm in the FRG, by contrast, was a ‘wife mother’, who remained ‘economically and socially subordinate’ to her husband.<sup>73</sup>

Although Viett draws a rosy picture of life in the GDR, she struggled to fit in. Partly this was because she found it difficult to avoid West German figures of speech and gestures and adopted a Stasi-narrative that left many people in her environment unconvinced, and partly because she refused to enter a marriage of convenience and rejected the model of the ‘worker-mother’. To calm down her nerves after the first day at work as Eva-Maria Sommer, Viett went to a bar and ordered ‘Cognac’ (French brandy) —a request to which the waitress responded with disbelief and sarcasm. After the second ‘Weinbrand’ (local brandy), Viett started to feel more positive about her situation, and soon she began to see the run-down photo laboratory where she worked as a space of creative improvisation and anarchic joy.<sup>74</sup> She writes: ‘after a long period of social isolation, I felt a profound willingness to embrace everything in a positive and constructive manner, a feeling which had emerged like a flying albatross spreading its wings’.<sup>75</sup> This emotional state and the actions resulting from it were not primarily gestures of compliance or resistance in relation to the existing political powers. Rather they were manifestations of *Eigensinn* that have affected her status and prospects in complex and at times contradictory ways.

Apart from her marital status and naïve enthusiasm for the GDR, Eva Maria Sommer fed suspicions with her Lada. Viett notes that she learned only later that her Russian car had

probably excited a similar amount of envy as a fancy sports car in the FRG.<sup>76</sup> After three and a half years in Dresden, an acquaintance recognized her on a wanted poster in the FRG. Once again, Inge Viett had to go into hiding and once again, she asked the Stasi to help her make a fresh start. In 1987, she moved to Magdeburg, where she rented a flat under the name Eva Maria Schnell. According to her new 'Legende' (life story), she had been born on 15 January 1946 in Moscow and was a widow with a degree in economics. Viett's new life story was not only closer to the biographies of her colleagues in the GDR, it also allowed her to rewrite her traumatic childhood. She made up a father who joined the Red Army to fight against Nazism, set her birthday on the day on which Rosa Luxemburg was shot in Berlin.<sup>77</sup> By creating a symbolic link to Luxemburg, Viett associated herself with a revolutionary thinker and activist who was immensely popular in East Germany. Up to this day, thousands of people gather on 15 January in Berlin to commemorate the murder of Luxemburg and her fellow campaigner Karl Liebknecht.<sup>78</sup>

Viett found it much easier to settle into her life in Magdeburg than in Dresden. After several years in the GDR, she was more confident in everyday life situations and found it less difficult to build relationships with neighbours and colleagues. Her new job was to organize summer camps for the children of the 6,500 employees of the *Schwermaschinenkombinat Karl Liebknecht*.<sup>79</sup> Apparently, she liked this job and was popular with her colleagues.<sup>80</sup> At no point does Viett mention how her life in the GDR relates to that of her heroine Rosa Luxemburg, but this, too, can be understood as an expression of *Eigensinn*. Viett openly acknowledges the subjective and emotional nature of her narrative, and she makes no effort to fill the gaps and to reconcile contradictions in her account.

In Magdeburg, Viett lived in a two-room apartment in a new housing development in Magdeburg Nord. In 1991, the journalist Christoph Scheuring described this part of Magdeburg

as a ‘dormitory town—a sad place during the day and a cemetery at night’.<sup>81</sup> Viett considers such negative depictions of life in the GDR as symptomatic of the ‘intellectual arrogance’ (*intellektuelle Hochmütigkeit*) of the bourgeois Left in the FRG.<sup>82</sup> In her autobiography, she emphasizes that her experience of life in the GDR was profoundly different: ‘The eight years that I spent in the GDR were too short to be bored for a single day; but they were long enough to develop a sense of shared responsibility for the heights and pitfalls, for the failures and achievements in the historically unique struggle for an alternative to the capitalist society’.<sup>83</sup>

Although Viett’s conformist behaviour in the GDR could be seen as a clear break with her revolutionary past, her narrative presents it as a continuation and extension of her revolutionary socialist politics in West Germany. Kim Richmond rightly emphasizes that ‘[a]utobiography creates the impression of a consistent identity over time and therefore it can, in many cases, represent the author’s pursuit of continuity and wholeness of self’.<sup>84</sup> According to this approach, Viett’s narrative can be read as an attempt to create a consistent revolutionary socialist identity, which evolved over time from an armed struggle against fascism, imperialism and capitalism to a nonviolent but no less committed struggle for an antifascist, anti-imperialist and anticapitalist society.

Viett’s blatant disregard for political repression in the GDR shows how strongly she identified with the East German state. Even the fact that social and political structures around her were disintegrating in the late 1980s could not undermine her faith that the GDR was the ‘better half’ of Germany.<sup>85</sup> In autumn 1989, she attended one of the Monday prayers in the Cathedral of Magdeburg. In an internal newsletter at her workplace, Viett warned colleagues in Magdeburg that this and other gatherings in churches were part of a counterrevolution that jeopardized the only chance of building a ‘truly democratic, humanist, social and antifascist society’.<sup>86</sup> While

many of her fellow workers were trying to leave the country, Inge Viett put all her energy into the next summer camp.<sup>87</sup> In the wake of the victory of the 'Alliance for Germany' at the elections to the People's Chamber on 18 March 1990, she was finally willing to accept that the population would not stand up for state socialism. She notes in her autobiography 'I feel as if the era that I was part of came to an end'.<sup>88</sup> Although she knew that this political change meant that her arrest was imminent, she made no attempt to escape.<sup>89</sup> After positioning herself as an opponent of the political and economic system of the FRG and supporter of the East German state socialism, Viett saw the reunification of Germany not as a positive development but as a hostile takeover.

Viett's arrest on 12 June 1990 was the result of concerted efforts by East and West German police authorities. Apparently, neighbours had recognized her on a wanted poster and reported her to West German police authorities who passed the message on to their East German colleagues. At a press conference on 13 June, a spokesman from the Federal Criminal Police Office praised the cooperation of police officers in the new and old states. The minister of the Interior of the GDR Peter-Michael Diestel raised hopes for further arrests of former terrorists and condemned the "unimaginably diabolical collaboration" between the dissolved Ministry for State Security and the West German terrorists' in the strongest terms.<sup>90</sup> By distancing themselves emphatically from their former 'comrades' in the RAF and MJ2, GDR authorities emphasized a new unity with their former enemy West Germany and underlined their commitment to the democratic principles of the FRG.

*Conclusion: (Re)constructing a Militant Life in Reunited Germany*

According to Christian Davenport, repression is present in all nation states but is perceived differently in different political contexts.<sup>91</sup> Indeed, while there is now a broad consensus that state repression in Nazi Germany and in the GDR was illegitimate, a certain degree of state repression in the FRG and other democratic states tends to be considered necessary and legitimate in the fight against terrorism—even if it involves measures that restrict the freedom of individual citizens and/or inflicts bodily pain on them. Inge Viett's narrative challenges this widely accepted view of state repression in twentieth century Germany in two ways. Firstly, she argues that West German state was a fascist, imperialist, authoritarian and thus illegitimate political regime, in which revolutionary violence was a necessary response to state repression. Secondly, she refuses to condemn state repression in the GDR and portrays political protest against the regime as counterrevolutionary. Following this logic, she claims that her trial had a double function for the newly reunified German state: to persecute and denunciate the urban Guerrilla in West Germany and to discredit the GDR by criminalizing the Stasi.<sup>92</sup>

In prison, the 'narrative (re)construction of [her] revolutionary self' became a central project for Inge Viett.<sup>93</sup> In this context, life writing was both a survival strategy and a form of resistance. Her narrative illustrates that autobiographical accounts do not merely document historical events. As the author of her own life story, Viett could select, structure, hide and resignify events in way that allowed her to develop a sense of self and meaning in a changing political landscape. Which events and developments are considered meaningful by the author (and her critics) tells us as much about her as an individual as about the political contexts in which the book was written and read.

Gready rightly emphasizes that even ‘within autobiography the written word is not completely one’s own, control is always incomplete and it remains to some extent a compromise, the self and the self-image do not coincide, they can never coincide in the written word’.<sup>94</sup> In 2000, Inge Viett threatened legal action against the film maker Volker Schlöndorff, who had used material from her autobiography for his film *Die Stille nach dem Schuss* (*The Legend of Rita*) without seeking her permission.<sup>95</sup> Schlöndorff countered that the film plot was inspired by Viett’s life rather than based on her book, and it was not his intention to tell the story from her point of view.<sup>96</sup> However, for Viett there was more at stake than her rights as an author. As this chapter has shown, her narrative allowed her to relate differently to the poverty and neglect that she experienced as a child and to create an imaged bond with Rosa Luxemburg and other revolutionary women. Most importantly, it enabled her to create a consistent revolutionary socialist identity in a period marked by drastic political changes.

Lüdtke’s notion of *Eigensinn* can help to complicate this image in a productive way. Although Viett’s narrative neatly divides most of her actions into acts of resistance against the FRG and activities in support of socialism, her views and actions do not always fit into this bipolar model. While Viett claims to be a committed anti-fascist who was deeply moved by the plight of Jewish-German citizens during the Third Reich, her political activity does not include a single attempt to show solidarity with the victims of the Holocaust or to protest against anti-Semitism. For the most part, Viett’s actions as member of armed leftist groups in West Germany focused on the release of imprisoned comrades and/or sought to secure the financial survival of the groups. A number of attacks seem to have hurt or killed people for the sole reason that they happened to be at the wrong place at the wrong time. Lüdtke writes about everyday life at the workplace during German fascism that the ‘preferred way of displaying *Eigensinn* was not

resistance against “above” but distance from everyone including your own work-mates’.<sup>97</sup> Viett’s decision to go underground and to stay in hiding for so many years was at least in part related to a desire to avoid a long prison sentence and to live an unconventional life that was neither that of the ‘wife-mother’ in the FRG nor that of the ‘worker-mother’ in the GDR. Viett experienced her life underground as free from authoritarian structures and oppressive gender norms and tried to keep up aspects of this lifestyle after she had made a fresh start in the GDR even if that was clearly not advantageous.

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<sup>1</sup> ‘eine Freiheitskämpferin, die sich die Freiheit genommen hatte, anderen Menschen die Freiheit zu nehmen, und die danach in einem unfreien Land glücklich war. Eine Kommunistin, die dem Kommunismus die Treue hielt, obwohl dieser sich schon selbst beerdigt hatte’. C. Scheuring, ‘Schuld und Sühne’, *Tempo*, December 1991.

<sup>2</sup> ‘ein Stück authentische Gegengeschichte’, I. Viett, *Nie war ich furchtloser* (Hamburg: Edition Nautilus 1997), 8.

<sup>3</sup> G. Rosenkranz, ‘Offene Rechnung’, *Die Zeit*, 4 September 1992.

<sup>4</sup> Publications by Inge Viett include autobiographical books and travelogues. See, e.g. I. Viett, *Einsprüche : Briefe aus dem Gefängnis* (Hamburg: Edition Nautilus, 1996); *Nie war ich furchtloser*; *Cuba Libre bittersüß* (Hamburg: Edition Nautilus, 1999); *Morengas Erben: Eine Reise durch Namibia* (Hamburg: Edition Nautilus, 2004).

<sup>5</sup> Radio Interview with Inge Viett in the programme *SWR 3 Leute*, 1 April 1997.

<sup>6</sup> ‘parteilich, subjektiv und emotional’. Viett, *Nie war ich furchtloser*, 249.

<sup>7</sup> A. Lüdtké, *The History of Everyday Life : Reconstructing Historical Experiences and Ways of Life* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1995), 313.



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<sup>8</sup> A. Lüdtke, 'Alltagsgeschichte: Aneignung und Akteure. Oder – es hat kaum begonnen!', *Werkstattgeschichte* 17 (1997), 84.

<sup>9</sup> P. Gready, 'Autobiography and the "Power of Writing": Political Prison Writing in the Apartheid Era', *Journal of Southern African Studies* 19(3) (1993), 493.

<sup>10</sup> Ibid, 521.

<sup>11</sup> K. Richmond, *Women Political Prisoners in Germany: Narratives of Self and Captivity, 1915-91*. (London: Institute of Modern Languages Research), 5-6.

<sup>12</sup> Ibid., 169.

<sup>13</sup> Ibid., 12-13.

<sup>14</sup> Ibid., 8.

<sup>15</sup> Lüdtke, *The History of Everyday Life*, 24. Editors' note: 'empathy' is used by Lüdtke in the sense of compassion—feeling with an other—as opposed to the notion of *Einfühlung* deployed by early twentieth-century empathy theorists including Theodor Lipps. For Lipps, 'empathy' was a process of finding oneself in the other; in Lüdtke, the emphasis is on how empathy facilitates insight into the subjective integrity of the other as an entity beyond the self. See T. Lipps, *Ästhetik: Psychologie des Schönen und der Kunst* (Hamburg & Leipzig: Leopold Voss, 1906).

<sup>16</sup> 'die Geschichte verlorener Revolutionen und niedergeschlagenen Widerstands', Viett, *Nie war ich furchtloser*, 7.

<sup>17</sup> K. Hanshew, *Terror and Democracy in West Germany* (Cambridge; New York: Cambridge University Press, 2012).

<sup>18</sup> D. Della Porta, *Social Movements, Political Violence, and the State: A Comparative Analysis of Italy and Germany* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), 191.

<sup>19</sup> Ibid., 16.

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<sup>20</sup> ‘Die VIETT wird in unmögliche häusliche Verhältnisse hineingeboren. Die Mutter wird als Schlampe bezeichnet. Mit 2 Jahren wird die VIETT wegen völliger Verwahrlosung durch die Mutter in Fürsorgeerziehung untergebracht und 1950 Pflegeeltern übergeben’, Hamburger Institut für Sozialgeschichte (HIS), KOK 08/002.

<sup>21</sup> Viett, *Nie war ich furchtloser*, 36, 44-45.

<sup>22</sup> ‘Wir versinken’. Viett, *Nie war ich furchtloser*, 44-45.

<sup>23</sup> Viett, *Nie war ich furchtloser*, 45.

<sup>24</sup> B. Martin, ‘Lesbian Identity and Autobiographical Difference(s)’, in S. Smith and J. Watson (eds), *Women, Autobiography, Theory: A Reader* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1998), 380-92, 390.

<sup>25</sup> Viett, *Nie war ich furchtloser*, 50.

<sup>26</sup> Ibid., 68.

<sup>27</sup> ‘die sieben Kinder gebären musste, die sie nicht ernähren, behüten und lieben konnte’, *ibid.*, 17.

<sup>28</sup> Ibid., 33, 21.

<sup>29</sup> Ibid., 21.

<sup>30</sup> ‘Mit welcher Feigheit und Täuschung hat diese Generation im westlichen Teil Deutschlands ihren Morast mit dem vulkanischem Konsumausbruch nach dem Krieg bedeckt’. Ibid., 232.

<sup>31</sup> Ibid., 233. For a detailed discussion of the legacy of the Nazi Past in the two Germanys, see J. Herf, *Divided Memory: The Nazi Past in the Two Germanys* (Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 1999).

<sup>32</sup> Ibid., 61.

<sup>33</sup> Ibid., 252.

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<sup>34</sup> ‘Hier trafen Frau und Mann sich, um über die neusten aufregenden Ereignisse in der “Politszene” zu sprechen, guten Shit zu rauchen, die neusten Platten zu hören, chinesischen Tee zu trinken, vielleicht einen gemeinsamen LSD-Trip zu unternehmen, oder auch nur um ein bisschen anzugeben, “in” zu sein, wenn es um Andy Warhol oder Kommune I oder Che Guevara oder Ravi Shankar ging’. Ibid., 73.

<sup>35</sup> A. Schwanhäusser, *Stilrevolte Underground : Die Alternativkultur als Agent der Postmoderne* (Münster: LIT, 2002), 19.

<sup>36</sup> M. Grob, *Das Kleidungsverhalten jugendlicher Protestgruppen in Deutschland im 20. Jahrhundert : Am Beispiel des Wandervogels und der Studentenbewegung*, Beiträge zur Volkskultur in Nordwestdeutschland, Heft 47 (Münster: F. Coppenrath, 1985), 203.

<sup>37</sup> D. Siegfried, *Time Is on My Side: Konsum und Politik in der westdeutschen Jugendkultur der 60er Jahre*, Hamburger Beiträge zur Sozial- und Zeitgeschichte (Göttingen: Wallstein, 2006), 402.

<sup>38</sup> ‘Was ich auf dieser und späteren Reisen in die benachteiligten, vom Kolonialismus ausgeplünderten Regionen der Welt sah, ... waren Ergebnisse von einer jahrundertealten räuberischen Besitz- und Machtgier der “zivilisierten” westlichen Welt’, Viett, *Nie war ich furchtloser*, 78.

<sup>39</sup> Ibid., 79.

<sup>40</sup> R. Fritzsich and R. Reinders, *Die Bewegung 2. Juni: Gespräche über Haschrebellen, Lorenzentführung, Knast* (Edition ID- Archiv: Berlin, 1995), 22-23.

<sup>41</sup> F. Neidhardt, ‘Linker und rechter Terrorismus. Erscheinungsformen und Handlungspotentiale im Gruppenvergleich’, in W. von Bayer-Katte et al. (eds), *Gruppenprozesse, Analysen zum Terrorismus* (Opladen: Westdeutscher Verlag, 1982), 438.

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<sup>42</sup> Viett, *Nie war ich furchtloser*, 83-85.

<sup>43</sup> K. Weinbauer, J. Requate and H.G. Haupt (eds), *Terrorismus in der Bundesrepublik: Medien, Staat und Subkulturen in den 1970er Jahren* (Frankfurt/Main: Campus, 2006), 225.

<sup>44</sup> T. Wunschik, 'Die Bewegung 2. Juni', in W. Kraushaar (ed.), *Die RAF und der linke Terrorismus*, (Hamburg: Hamburger Edition, 2006), 531-61, 542-43.

<sup>45</sup> On the anniversary of the Jewish pogrom in 1938, the TW carried out an attack against a Jewish community centre and painted pro-Palestinian slogans on Jewish memorials in Berlin. Whilst distancing itself emphatically from the anti-Semitism of the Third Reich, the group considered Israel a fascist state and wanted to show solidarity with the Palestinian people. For a detailed discussion of anti-Semitism in the West German Left, see V. Weiss,

“‘Volksklassenkampf’. Die antizionistische Rezeption des Nahostkonflikts in der militanten Linken der BRD’, *Tel Aviver Jahrbuch für deutsche Geschichte* (2005), 214-38.

<sup>46</sup> A. Schildt and D. Siegfried. *Deutsche Kulturgeschichte: Die Bundesrepublik. 1945 bis zur Gegenwart* (Bonn: Bundeszentrale für Politische Bildung, 2009), 384.

<sup>47</sup> 'Foco' is Spanish for focus. 'Foco theories' or focalism is a form of guerrilla warfare that focuses on operations by small and mobile groups of fighters that are supported by larger parts of the population.

<sup>48</sup> M. Jander, 'Differenzen im antiimperialistischen Kampf. Zu den Verbindungen des Ministeriums für Staatssicherheit mit der RAF und dem bundesdeutschen Linksterrorismus', in W. Kraushaar (ed.), *Die RAF und der linke Terrorismus* (Hamburg: Hamburger Edition, 2006), 696-713, 699.

<sup>49</sup> *Ibid.*, 697.

<sup>50</sup> Wunschik, 'Die Bewegung 2. Juni', 557.

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<sup>51</sup> On 30 January 1972, British soldiers killed and wounded twenty-six unarmed protesters during a demonstration in Derry, Northern Ireland. For a detailed discussion of the events, see D. Walsh, *Bloody Sunday and the Rule of Law in Northern Ireland* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 2000).

<sup>52</sup> In an internal document from 1978, a high-ranking member of the armed forces stated: 'Die Handlungen dieser Personen [three members of the MJ2] werden ausgehend von unserer grundsätzlichen Position ... nicht gebilligt. Aber—ausgehend vom Klassenstandpunkt—ist dies absolut kein Grund, den Imperialisten, insbesondere in der BRG, in irgendeiner Weise gegen diese Personenkreise Unterstützung zu geben' (Stasi Archive Berlin, MfS HA XXII 19188, 18).

<sup>53</sup> Detailed descriptions of many of these trips can be found in the Stasi Archive. See, e.g. MfS HA XX AIG 496, MfS XV 17463/91, MfS HA XXII 19188.

<sup>54</sup> 'Nie in meinem Leben war ich sicherer und furchtloser als in dieser Zeit im Untergrund, dem Ort der ein neues, anderes Sein außerhalb der häßlichen Welt gestattete. Nie war ich freier nie war ich gebundener an meine eigene Verantwortung als in dem Zustand völliger Abnabelung von der staatlichen Autorität und von gesellschaftlichen Vorgaben. Kein Gesetz, keine äußere Gewalt bestimmte mehr mein Verhältnis zur Welt, zu meinen Mitmenschen, zum Leben zum Tod'. Viett, *Nie war ich furchtloser*, 114-15.

<sup>55</sup> 'Wir sind alle nicht aus der feministischen Bewegung gekommen ... Wir haben nicht bewusst so einen Frauenbefreiungsprozess für uns durchleben wollen ... Wir haben uns einfach entschieden, und wir haben dann gekämpft und dieselben Dinge getan wie die Männer. Es war für uns keine Frage Mann-Frau. Das alte Rollenverständnis hat für uns in der Illegalität keine Rolle gespielt'. G. Diewald-Kerkmann, 'Frauen in der RAF', *BPB Spezial: 'Wer wenn nicht*

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wir'. Retrieved 25 January 2017 from

<http://www.bpb.de/gesellschaft/kultur/filmbildung/43364/frauen-in-der-raf?p=all>.

<sup>56</sup> Viett, *Nie war ich furchtloser*, 239.

<sup>57</sup> 'Vielleicht hatte sie bereits einer Partisanin Schutz gegeben. Sie war für eine Frauenhand vortrefflich geeignet. Ich pflegte sie wie ein kostbares Erbstück'. Ibid., 119.

<sup>58</sup> The German Autumn (*Deutscher Herbst*) refers to a dramatic peak in the escalating conflict between the RAF and the West German state. It began with the abduction of the business executive Hanns-Martin Schleyer in September 1977 and ended with the death of the detained RAF founder members in October of the same year.

<sup>59</sup> Fritsch and Reinders, *Die Bewegung 2. Juni*, 122.

<sup>60</sup> HIS, MfS 73/022 KOPIE BStU Archiv Nr.: 2984/74.

<sup>61</sup> Viett, *Nie war ich furchtloser*, 225.

<sup>62</sup> Ibid., 179-80.

<sup>63</sup> For details, see e.g. M. Kanonenberg and A. Müller, *Die RAF-Stasi Connection* (Berlin: Rowohlt, 1992).

<sup>64</sup> Viett, *Nie war ich furchtloser*, 206.

<sup>65</sup> 'auch sie sind undurchschaubar und unberechenbar', ibid.

<sup>66</sup> Jander, 'Differenzen im antiimperialistischen Kampf', 711.

<sup>67</sup> In September 1981, the French police officer Francis Violleau wanted to fine Viett for a traffic offence. After a wild chase, Viett found herself cornered and shot Violleau to escape. Paralyzed since the attack, he died in 2000 at the age of fifty-four. G. Moréas, 'Un nom sur une porte: mémorial pour un flic', le monde blogs, 18 April 2000. Retrieved 10 August 2017 from: <http://moreas.blog.lemonde.fr/2010/04/18/un-nom-sur-une-porte-memorial-pour-un-flic/>.

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<sup>68</sup> Viett, *Nie war ich furchtloser*, 255.

<sup>69</sup> ‘Ich bin Arbeiter, wer ist mehr?’, ‘Den Sozialismus aufbauen’, *ibid.*, 253.

<sup>70</sup> ‘Wohin du in der kapitalistischen Gesellschaft den Blick auch wendest, die Schritte lenkst, die Sinne richtest, stößt du an ihre Propaganda’. *Ibid.*, 254.

<sup>71</sup> ‘typische DDR-Frauen: qualifiziert, verheiratet, ein Kind, doppelt belastet’, *ibid.*, 268.

<sup>72</sup> M. Marx Ferree, *Varieties of Feminism: German Gender Politics in Global Perspective* (Stanford, California: Stanford University Press, 2012), 142.

<sup>73</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>74</sup> Viett, *Nie war ich furchtloser*, 258-60.

<sup>75</sup> ‘Nach der langen Zeit sozialer Isolation hatte die Bereitschaft, alles positiv aufzunehmen, sich in meinem Inneren ausgebreitet wie der fliegende Albatros seine Schwingen’. Viett, *Nie war ich furchtloser*, 259.

<sup>76</sup> Viett, *Nie war ich furchtloser*, 270.

<sup>77</sup> ‘Große Freiheit, kleine Freiheit’, documentary, 83 min, directed by Kristina Konrad, 1:04.

<sup>78</sup> M. Hollstein, ‘Gedenkfeier für Rosa Luxemburg spaltet die Linke’, *Die Welt*, 12 January 2013.

Retrieved 10 August 2017 from

<https://www.welt.de/politik/deutschland/article112725362/Gedenkfeier-fuer-Rosa-Luxemburg-spaltet-die-Linke.html>.

<sup>79</sup> M. Kriener, ‘Den Totschläger auf dem Nachttisch’, *die tageszeitung*, 15 June 1990.

<sup>80</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>81</sup> “‘Schlafburg’ – ein Trauerspiel am Tage und ein Friedhof bei Nacht’, Scheuring, ‘Schuld und Sühne’.

<sup>82</sup> Viett, *Nie war ich furchtloser*, 248.

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- <sup>83</sup> ‘Meine acht Jahre in der DDR waren zu kurz, auch nur einen Tag Langeweile zu haben ... Aber sie waren lang genug, ... mitverantwortlich zu sein für alle Höhen und Abgründe, für Mißlungenes und Gelungenes im geschichtlich einzigartigen Kampf für und um die Alternative zur kapitalistischen Gesellschaft’, *ibid.*
- <sup>84</sup> Richmond, *Women Political Prisoners in Germany*, 91.
- <sup>85</sup> I. Viett: “‘Daß der Kampf sinnlos ist” Inge Vietts Abschiedsbrief an ihr Magdeburger Arbeitskollektiv’, *taz*, 14 July 1990.
- <sup>86</sup> Viett, *Nie war ich furchtloser*, 298.
- <sup>87</sup> *Ibid.*, 293.
- <sup>88</sup> ‘Mir ist, als ginge ein Zeitalter unter, zu dem ich gehöre’. *Ibid.*, 303.
- <sup>89</sup> ‘Wohin auch? Und wofür noch? Der Kapitalismus ist überall’. *Ibid.*
- <sup>90</sup> “‘unsäglich teuflische ... Zusammenarbeit” zwischen dem aufgelösten Staatssicherheitsministerium und den westdeutschen Terroristen’. K.H. Baum, ‘Über ihr wohnte ein Bevollmächtigter der Polizei’, *Frankfurter Rundschau*, 15 June 1990.
- <sup>91</sup> C. Davenport, *State repression and the domestic democratic peace* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 35.
- <sup>92</sup> Viett, *Nie war ich furchtloser*, 309.
- <sup>93</sup> C. Bielby, ‘Narrating the Revolutionary Self in German Post-Terrorist Life-Writing: Gender, Identity and Historical Agency’, *German Life and Letters* 67 (2) (2014), 237.
- <sup>94</sup> Gready, ‘Autobiography and the “Power of Writing”’, 507.
- <sup>95</sup> ‘Schlöndorff vs. Inge Viett: Streit um Urheberrecht beigelegt’, *Spiegel Online*, 14 September 2000. Retrieved 25 January 2017 from <http://www.spiegel.de/kultur/gesellschaft/schloendorff-vs-inge-viett-streit-um-urheberrecht-beigelegt-a-93321.html>.



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