

Engagement at the End of an Era:

Evaluating the role of obligation in writers' contributions to the
West German peace movement 1979-1985

Tom Padden, MA

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Abstract

This thesis examines the contributions of politically engaged writers to the West German peace movement in the final stages of the Cold War.

The intensified arms race and related confrontations in the late 1970s and early 1980s were met with a similarly intensified reaction from peace movements in West Germany and beyond, supported by a variety of groups and individuals, including engaged writers.

My thesis poses the question of how concepts of political, positional, and moral obligation defined and justified these writers' public engagement in this period, and furthermore examines what distinct contributions these figures made to the wider West German peace movement based on these obligations.

This analysis uses primary materials relating to a range of forms of writers' engagement in this period, and explores both explicit and implicit forms of obligation supporting the roles and positions taken on by these figures. These include engaged writers' direct contributions to protest actions, debates concerning the peace movement in the context of writers' conferences, organisational involvement under the aegis of the Verband deutscher Schriftsteller, and literary engagement through poetry.

Although not arguing that engaged writers singlehandedly led or defined peace protests in this period, my thesis demonstrates that these figures played a number of key contributory roles alongside the many other groups and individuals who made up the broader peace movement. These contributions were made with the support of engaged writers' particular status and expertise, along with more general factors including their shared position

as citizens alongside other protesters, with varied forms of obligation playing a key role in defining and justifying these forms of engagement.

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‘Warum also dennoch diesen Brief? Weil es gesagt werden muß.’¹

¹ Günter Grass, ‘An die Abgeordneten des Deutschen Bundestages’, *Die Zeit*, 18 November 1983, 47 edn, section Feuilleton, p. 47.

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1. Introduction

On the morning of 1 September 1983, Heinrich Böll sat on the muddy ground outside an American military base in Baden-Württemberg and, along with other assembled protesters, played his part in attempting to prevent nuclear war.

The demonstration which Böll was supporting came to be known as the ‘Prominentenblockade’ due to the presence of many prominent figures including writers alongside other protesters, and took place in a series of protests in the autumn of 1983 which culminated in the mobilisation of over a million demonstrators across the Federal Republic in the name of peace and nuclear disarmament. These events occurred at the apex of tensions in the final stage of the Cold War, as well as the peace movement’s protest activities, which were aimed chiefly at averting the catastrophic conflict to which these mounting international tensions could easily have led.

In this wider context, the image of an engaged writer – even one as accomplished as Böll – sitting out in the cold in an attempt to save the world from nuclear destruction could easily appear inconsequential, or even comical. After all, there is little indication that the opinions of writers were a high priority in the strategic decision making of the West German government. However, the engagement of writers such as Böll in this period did not aim to single-handedly change the policies of the Federal Republic, nor did it aim to lead the uninformed masses towards a better future through the heroic endeavours of enlightened individuals. Instead, writers’ engagement with the peace movement in this period took on a contributory nature, as individuals

used the status and expertise associated with their roles as writers to lend their voices to the peace movement as one part of a much larger whole, taking on positions which were frequently defined and justified by a sense of obligation.

The development of the peace movement in West Germany in the early 1980s, and the roles of engaged writers in this period are large, complex issues, and a considerable amount of research has been undertaken on each. However, while expressions of obligation have frequently been drawn on for both the specific roles of engaged individuals such as writers, and in more general terms of justifying and arguing the necessity of protest in the context of the Cold War, the function of obligation in peace protests remains an underexplored area. My thesis therefore contributes to the field of research by applying theoretical models of political, positional, and moral obligation to these forms of public engagement. To this end, two central research questions form the core of my analysis:

1. To what extent were obligations involved in defining and justifying writers' contributions to the West German peace movement in this period?
2. What distinct contributions did engaged writers make to the peace movement – either as individuals or as part of collective forms of engagement – based on these obligations?

Returning to the contribution of Heinrich Böll at the Mutlangen blockade, a variety of other issues arise alongside these central research questions. How did a Nobel laureate end up camped outside a military base? What was his relation to the other protesters whom he had joined that day?

Why did he become involved in the peace movement in the first place? In a more general sense, did any of this matter, and why should we care about it now, long after the questions of Pershing missiles and the Cold War have been resolved? By examining the contributions and obligations of engaged writers in the West German peace movement, my thesis aims to provide answers to these additional questions, along with insight into the implications of these issues for both engaged writers and the wider peace movement.

Before beginning to address these questions however, it is necessary to consider current research into the areas of the West German peace movement, the relations between writers and politics in the Federal Republic, and theories of obligation, both to provide context for my work, and to more clearly identify the niche which my research occupies.

1.1. Context of research

In analysing the roles and obligations of engaged writers with the West German peace movement, my thesis places itself at the intersection of three broad areas of research. While these fields will be examined in greater detail as part of my theoretical framework in Chapters 2-4, a brief overview here is useful to provide an outline for the position of my research.

1.1.1. The West German peace movement in the 1980s

The first broader area of research on which my thesis draws is the examination of the peace movement in West Germany at the tail end of the Cold War. The main function of this chapter is to provide an overview of the development of the peace movement in this period, and thereby provide a basis on which the rest of my analysis can build. This is particularly important for defining the

contributory nature of writers' engagement with the peace movement. While my case studies may focus on the roles and obligations of engaged writers, this broader overview of the peace movement, its mobilisation structures, and its diverse support bases provides a necessary perspective on the multitude of groups and individuals involved in these developments.

A wide variety of views on this protest movement have been put forward, including Josef Janning's analysis of the movement developing from a single issue protest to incorporate a much wider variety of issues, to Rüdiger Schmitt's perspective on a more directly oppositional relationship between protesters and the West German government, to the arguments of Gassert, Geiger, and Wentke, characterising the movement as a reaction to wider geopolitical developments in the final period of intensification in the Cold War. However, across these diverse analyses, a number of common elements can be found.

Firstly, the development of the peace movement in this period is characterised by a series of distinct phases, from disparate, low-intensity activities in the late 1970s, through a period of transition marked by increasing visibility, leading to a period of mass mobilisation and high-profile protest actions in the early 1980s, which eventually came to an end with the fragmentation and diversification of the movement by the midpoint of the decade. Thus, the peace movement and its underlying social and political issues can be seen to have neither appeared nor disappeared overnight, and the roles of diverse supporters can be seen as central to both the development and eventual fragmentation of the movement.

Throughout the phases of its development, the peace movement in this period was characterised by its mass mobilisation across broad support bases, encompassing a diverse variety of groups and individuals. These disparate supporting elements often had very different motivations, interests, and goals, and were held together at the peak of the peace movement's activity by the concept of a minimal consensus on the basic principles of their protest, namely an opposition to the stationing of American nuclear weapons in West Germany and the prospect of war with the Eastern bloc. This element was crucial for cohesion between groups, particularly in mass protest actions, and an eventual shift away from the shared consensus after 1983 marked the end of the peace movement's high point of activity. While this support structure prevented any one group or particular set of interests dominating the development of the peace movement, it can also be argued that this arrangement prevented any particular group from making distinct contributions of its own to the wider movement, let alone the more independently minded acts of engagement undertaken by writers in this context.

While my thesis accepts that writers did not play a leading role in the development of the peace movement and its protest activities in this period, the concept of these individuals making distinct, meaningful contributions to the wider peace movement is central to my analysis. This applies to a number of contributors who played distinctive roles as part of the larger movement, including pacifist, feminist, and religious groups, along with engaged writers, as will be examined in each of my four case studies, which encompass both writers' distinct contributions to mass protest actions, and particular forms of engagement undertaken by writers on an individual and collective basis.

1.1.2. Obligation

The second defining influence on my analysis in this thesis is the concept of obligation. Although often representing a general sense of necessity in everyday speech, often with negative or at least uninspiring connotations, theoretical models of obligation have been put forward as key components of behaviour across a variety of political and social contexts, as Chapter 3 will show.

I have chosen to examine the influence of obligation on writers' engagement with the peace movement partly due to this influence on behaviour and the concept of necessity, particularly in the context of the Cold War, in which obligations to protest and speak out were commonly used in discussions surrounding the peace movement, as a defining and justifying factor regarding the necessity of acting in the face of a potentially catastrophic threat. In addition to this general influence of concepts of obligation and necessity, I have chosen to undertake a systematic application of theoretical models of obligation to the context of writers' engagement with the West German peace movement because an analysis of this kind has not previously been undertaken, and it is my aim to contribute to the understanding of both the peace movement in this period and the position of engaged writers within it with my analysis. The three main definitions of obligation which are handled throughout my analysis are political, positional, and moral.

Neither the models of obligation examined in my theoretical framework nor their application across my case studies should be seen as all-encompassing factors which are universally present in every action undertaken in relation to the peace movement, or any other public or political activity. My

thesis will argue that political, positional, and moral obligations played key roles in defining and justifying a number of positions and forms of writers' engagement in this context, but they were by no means the only factor involved in these activities, and cannot necessarily be applied with equal relevance to every possible situation.

Furthermore, the theories of obligation examined in my thesis are generally not particularly sensitive to context. On the one hand, this allows them to be widely applicable – for instance, political obligations can be applied within democratic political systems regardless of the particular policies of whichever political party may be in power, and similarly pressing political obligations may be identified for citizens of parliamentary and presidential republics, despite the differences in the specifics of their respective political systems. On the other hand, the sets of ideals laid out in models of political, positional, and moral obligation can also be problematic, as figures such as Carole Pateman have identified a number of issues involved in imposing somewhat simplified models of obligation onto the messy reality of practical contexts.

This issue of application is particularly relevant for the obligations involved in writers' engagement with the peace movement. Although obligations frequently play a key role in defining and justifying the positions and forms of engagement examined in my thesis, they are not applied uniformly. In fact, different perspectives and interpretations of obligation often proved to be sources of conflict as well as cohesion in relation to writers' engagement.

1.1.3. The roles of writers

Leading on from the specific context of the peace movement in the 1980s and the broader theoretical models of obligation, the final area of research which shapes my thesis concerns the expectations and roles of writers. This overview draws on a number of obligations involved in the understanding of writers' roles, and provides the final part of the theoretical framework on which my case studies will build.

The question of writers' roles in relation to the political and social environs in which they live and work has been equal parts influential and problematic, from the individual level to the broader dynamics of the socio-political and literary landscapes. It is hard to find a more direct example of this influence than in the Federal Republic of Germany, in which engaged writers have combined active participation in political and social developments in the post-war era with older concepts of intellectual engagement, and as a result have been held as national consciences, critical voices, and dangerous radicals. These roles have led prominent engaged writers to be portrayed as champions of open discourse and as subversive threats to the democratic order – sometimes simultaneously. Although theories of writers' direct influence on society and politics are somewhat nebulous and open to interpretation, a variety of models for writers' roles and engagement with these issues have been put forward, both in the West German context and in broader theoretical terms.

Research undertaken in this field influences my analysis in two main ways. The first, which forms the bulk of my analysis in Chapter 4, concerns the roles and associated obligations which factor into expectations of writers'

public presence and engagement. These range from expectations of complete detachment to direct involvement with socio-political issues, and draw on a range of obligations, some of which are characterised as unique to the positions of writers, and others which are more generally defined and shared with other citizens. As will be shown across my case studies, these roles have proven to be somewhat contentious, both in terms of how they should be interpreted, and at the more basic level of the validity of claims to their fulfilment. Furthermore, debates around the interpretation, validity, and application of these roles are equally present in the forms of engagement at the centre of my analysis, and in the body of research concerning the relations between writers and politics.

In addition to these models of writers' expected roles, the second important factor lies in the development of the roles and perceptions of engaged writers in the Federal Republic. This includes attitudes relating to engaged writers during the period of their involvement with the peace movement in the 1980s, but also concerns the developing roles of these figures in the preceding decades, as well as further developments between the 1980s and the present day. These additional developments add further context to my analysis of the roles and obligations of engaged writers, with the former adding to the expectations associated with these figures and their engagement with the peace movement, and the latter affecting contemporary perceptions, particularly with the idea that the era of engaged writers in Germany was drawing to an end by the 1980s. To this end, my research draws on broad analyses of the developing roles of writers throughout the history of the Federal Republic, including works by K. Stuart Parkes and Helmut Peitsch, but

also a number of more specific examinations of particular instances of writers' engagement.

One final factor which must be noted in relation to these analyses in particular is that a number of authors examining specific factors in the roles and influence of engaged writers can themselves be included as part of this group. This includes Günter Grass's concept of engaged writers as court jesters of the modern era, Hans Magnus Enzensberger's critique of relations between writers and politics descending to the level of a children's game, and many more. My analysis therefore takes into account not only the theories of engaged writers' roles, obligations, and justifications, but also the involvement (or in the case of Enzensberger by the 1980s, non-involvement) with the subjects at hand.

1.1.4. Position of my research

Although extensive research has been undertaken in each of the three areas detailed above, there has to this point been comparatively little overlap between them. The actions of engaged writers are frequently overlooked in analyses of the broader trends and larger groups contributing to the peace movement in the 1980s, and while obligations factor into the definitions of writers' roles in a number of ways, the application of these roles and obligations to the specific context of the peace movement is equally under-examined. Therefore, my research occupies a previously unfilled niche in the application of theories of obligation to the roles and contributions of engaged writers in the West German peace movement.

Although my thesis focusses on these roles, I will not be arguing that engaged writers single-handedly defined the development of the peace movement, nor will I aim to overturn the models of mass mobilisation and decentralised support structures which defined the peace movement and its activities in favour of a focus solely on the influence of a handful of individuals. Instead, my thesis examines the activities of engaged writers in this context as contributions to the wider peace movement, with these figures adding their voices and their influence to the multitude of other groups and individuals which provided its mass support basis and shaped its activities. The roles of engaged writers were fulfilled through direct cooperation with other members of the peace movement in protest actions, and in more independent endeavours which engaged with themes and issues relating to the movement. This included general forms of support adding to the public presence of the peace movement's activities, along with engagement with some of the more specific themes and argumentation strategies. This does not however mean that engaged writers were integrated into the wider peace movement to the point of becoming indistinguishable from other groups. Over the course of my analysis, I will argue that distinct roles, obligations, and contributions can be identified on the part of writers across a range of contexts and forms of engagement. Therefore, my analysis stands at the intersection of research into the development of the West German peace movement, and the position of engaged writers in the Federal Republic, and through the application of theories of obligation to these forms of engagement, aims to provide insight into both of these areas.

This application of obligation to these forms of engagement places my analysis in a somewhat different context to the models examined in my theoretical framework. These theories generally characterise obligation as an issue of citizenship or ethics, with particular emphasis on its influence on compliance or non-compliance, either with the state, specific positions with social expectations, or more general moral principles, often tied to social conventions. With the application of obligations to the peace movement, however, my thesis puts forward a different perspective. Although the protest movement and its supporters opposed governmental policies on defence and nuclear armament, the strict adherence to non-violent protest as a means of expressing discontent does not constitute non-compliance or a rejection of the rules and principles of the West German state, or of democratic society in general. Obligation is used throughout the instances of engagement examined in my thesis as a rhetorical tool as well as a motivating and defining factor in the protesting positions taken on by engaged writers, but not to the point of outright rejection or resistance to the state. Therefore, these forms of engagement go beyond the paradigm of compliance and non-compliance with the state and society based on acceptance or rejection of obligations.

The final point to be made on the position of my research concerns my choice of writers as the subject of my analysis. My thesis examines the roles and obligations of engaged writers as a loosely affiliated group, forming part of the wider peace movement in the 1980s. My analysis is therefore not intended as a biographical study of specific individuals and their relation to the peace movement over the course of its development, and instead puts forward four case studies covering four forms of engagement. This does not mean that

the personal dimension is excluded completely, as several prominent figures including Heinrich Böll, Günter Grass, and Bernt Engelmann played influential roles across multiple forms of engagement, and the attitudes and discussions between individual writers add to the definition, justification, and expression of their roles and obligations. Nonetheless, it is these roles and obligations, along with their influence on writers' contributions to the wider peace movement which form the central focus of my thesis.

1.2. Choice of materials

The four case studies which form the core of my thesis are predominantly based on the use of published materials. These include transcripts of speeches and conference proceedings, literary works such as engaged poetry, and a variety of newspaper sources, from editorials to reportage relating to the activities of engaged writers and the wider peace movement. This focus on published materials reflects the importance my research places on public engagement in relation to the peace movement, meaning that the public image and perceptions of writers' engagement can be just as vital for the influence of these figures on the wider protest movement as the acts of engagement themselves. This does not however mean that these secondary reports – or even the primary sources – will be treated as simple, objective records of the peace movement's activities or the roles of writers within them. Across each of the case studies, a critical analysis of the provenance of the sources used will be a central part of my methodology, and will thereby provide additional insight into the reception of the roles and obligations put forward as part of writers' engagement with the peace movement.

Examining these issues of engaged writers' roles and obligations presents a multitude of possible approaches and instances of engagement represented across these materials. My thesis does not aim to provide a comprehensive analysis of every possible form of engagement with the peace movement in this period, and my analysis instead maintains a closer focus on four case studies. This does not however mean that my research restricts itself to four isolated examples of engagement relating to four isolated sets of roles and obligations. The case studies I have chosen for this analysis cover a range of forms of engagement, from the direct to the indirect and from the individual to the collective, and provide perspectives on a similarly diverse range of roles and obligations underpinning these activities. Moreover, throughout the instances examined across the case studies, a number of common themes can be identified. While different roles and obligations may come to the fore in different contexts, their consistent influence on writers' engagement allows the four case studies to expand on the issues raised in the theoretical framework, and address the overarching research questions in this thesis.

As useful as the case studies chosen for this analysis are, there are a number of other areas which could provide further insight into the issues at hand, but which I have not been able to address in this thesis.

The first of these issues lies in an opposing stance to the forms of engagement examined in my thesis, namely an abstention from engagement in principle. This can occur as a result of rejecting the roles and obligations put forward as supporting factors in writers' engagement, or alternatively as an interpretation of these factors which precluded engagement with the peace movement, for instance in order to preserve the detached or non-partisan status

of writers. In either case, a similar position is put forward, with writers abstaining from engagement in their work, and in some cases distancing themselves from their engaged colleagues. This can apply to a specific aversion to engagement with the peace movement, such as Manès Sperber's critique of the movement in the context of the Cold War,² or in more general terms such as Hans Magnus Enzensberger's less than positive attitude towards literary engagement in the period.³ Although providing the potential for further insight into interpretations of obligation, this theme of abstaining from engagement does not form a central part of my analysis for two reasons. Firstly, while the question of obligation may be investigated in this area, my other research question dealing with the contributions of engaged writers to the West German peace movement is by definition not applicable to the position of abstention. While some of these attitudes are brought up as counterpoints or even points of contention in contrast to the forms of engagement put forward across the case studies, the direct consequences and contributions of abstaining writers to the peace movement are minimal. An additional difficulty in terms of evaluating writers' abstention from engagement lies in the simple fact that it is difficult to analyse the absence of engagement. My thesis focusses on acts of engagement undertaken by writers in relation to the peace movement, and the position of abstention from engagement is not supported by a comparable body of materials. While some examples of opposition to engagement are in evidence, an analysis of the more general position of abstaining from

² J. Neander, 'Manès Sperber warnt die Pazifisten', *Die Welt*, 17 October 1983, 242 edn, p. 1.

³ Hans Magnus Enzensberger, *Mittelmass und Wahn : gesammelte Zerstreungen* (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 1988), p. 42.

engagement through a lack of publications or participation in public discussions is somewhat less suited to my methodology.

A second issue which will not be covered in my analysis concerns the factor of personal, independent engagement on the periphery of the peace movement. This includes statements of support, discussions of the movement's themes and ideals, and other contributions made on a personal basis, and not directly associated with the protest activities of the movement itself, or the organised forms of writers' engagement examined in the chosen case studies. Again, this area provides the potential for many further perspectives on the engagement, roles, and obligations of writers in relation to the peace movement, but due to the diverse and unstructured nature of these forms of engagement, categorising and analysing every independent contribution to the peace movement would be a large project in itself. Instead, my analysis restricts itself to the four main areas covered in the case studies, and includes a variety of individuals' contributions and acts of engagement in relation to them and to the wider peace movement. This therefore fits the broader aims of my research not to provide a comprehensive analysis of all forms of writers' engagement, but rather to examine a variety of relevant contributions to the peace movement, and the roles and obligations involved in their fulfilment.

The final area which my research is not able to cover concerns the wider applications of the roles and obligations of engaged writers in contexts beyond the West German peace movement in the final stages of the Cold War. While my thesis covers a number of forms of engagement and associated obligations, it retains a somewhat tight focus on the actions of engaged writers in relation to the peace movement during the period 1979-1985, with particular

focus on the highpoint of protest activities between 1981 and 1983. Although there is no lack of material within these parameters, many further possibilities exist for the application of theories of obligation and the roles of writers in contexts beyond the peace movement in this period. Of all the elements which cannot be covered in my thesis, these prospective wider applications provide particularly inviting possibilities for future research.

1.3. Thesis structure

My thesis is divided into two main parts. The theoretical framework in Chapters 2-4 outlines the relevant context and theoretical models on which my deeper analysis is based, and is followed by four case studies in Chapters 5-8 which examine the obligations and roles of engaged writers in four distinct forms of engagement with the West German peace movement.

With the aim of providing a comprehensive background for the main analysis in this thesis, **Chapter 2** gives an overview of the West German peace movement in the late 1970s and 1980s. This includes an examination of the historical context – expanding on the section above – along with an overview of the development of the movement, its mobilisation, and the varied support bases which underpinned it.

Leading on from the historical context of the peace movement, **Chapter 3** focusses more on the theoretical foundation of my thesis by analysing theories of obligation and their applications for writers and engagement. This chapter also addresses Bourdieu's theory of symbolic power, and its application as a complement or counterpoint to theories of obligation in the forms of engagement at the centre of my analysis.

Building on the examination of the peace movement, the socio-political context in which it occurred, and the theories of obligation relevant to engagement, **Chapter 4** examines the roles of writers, both in terms of the expectations associated with writers in general, and in terms of the roles and associated obligations taken on by these figures specifically in relation to public engagement.

With the theoretical framework for my analysis outlined in these three chapters, **Chapter 5** presents the first case study bringing these themes together, with an analysis of engaged writers' direct contributions to a series of peace movement demonstrations in the early 1980s. This includes speeches made as part of the protest actions, more general representation and support for the themes of the peace movement, and the symbolic roles taken on with the physical presence of prominent individuals at demonstrations. This chapter also examines the role of engaged writers as a cohesive force in a mass mobilised movement with disparate support bases, and the extent to which obligations were involved in the fulfilment of these roles.

In contrast to the direct involvement in mass protests in Chapter 5, **Chapter 6** examines a much more insular affair, with a series of writers' summits in the period 1981-1983. Despite their differences in specific aims and attendees, all four of the summits examined in this chapter feature the engagement of attending writers with the themes of peace, and include lively discussions of the roles, obligations, and justifications involved in the engagement – or abstention from engagement in some cases – with a wide range of issues, both general and specific.

Following the discussions between writers in a conference setting, **Chapter 7** analyses the wider topic of organisational engagement, focussing on the Verband deutscher Schriftsteller and a crisis centring on the representative roles and obligations of its members and leadership which engulfed the organisation in the 1980s. This analysis includes contrasts between engagement and writers' professional roles, from the general issues of writers' status as public figures to the practical concerns of earning a living through literary work, along with a number of key conflicts which arose between individual writers within the VS, often revolving around these figures' interpretations of the roles and obligations which they had taken on.

My final case study in **Chapter 8** returns to the public roles of engaged writers, specifically in the form of literary engagement. This analysis focusses on engaged poetry, examining two anthologies – *Acht Minuten noch zu leben?*,⁴ a collection of West German poems published in the GDR, and *Was sind das für Zeiten*,⁵ which presents a more general selection of German language works published in the Federal Republic. This chapter includes several key issues, including the status of literary engagement as writers' main area of expertise, aesthetic issues involved in politicised poetry, and the factors of representation and solidarity between poet and audience, particularly in terms of the collected poems' treatment of themes such as fear and the intrusion of militarisation into everyday life.

⁴ Hans van Ooyen, *Acht Minuten noch zu leben?: Neue Friedensgedichte aus der BRD* (Berlin: Neues Leben, 1987).

⁵ *Was Sind Das Für Zeiten: Deutschsprachige Gedichte der achtziger Jahre*, ed. by Hans Bender (München: C. Hanser, 1988).

With this analysis over the course of a three-part theoretical framework and four case studies examining diverse forms of engagement, my thesis will address a wide range of themes and issues relating to engaged writers' contributions to the West German peace movement. It is through this examination of multi-faceted issues across a range of contexts that my research will identify both distinct and common elements and examine them in further detail, all of which help to address my two overarching research questions of the roles of engaged writers in the West German peace movement, and the obligations involved in their engagement.

2. The peace movement

In order to effectively analyse the themes of obligation and writers' engagement with the West German peace movement, an examination of political developments in this era along with the development of the movement itself in this context must first be provided. This is a very broad topic which has a multitude of works entirely dedicated to it, meaning that a comprehensive analysis of all developments pertaining to the peace movement cannot be achieved in a single chapter. Instead, this chapter focuses on three main objectives. Firstly, it will provide a brief overview of the peace movement's key developments and the political and social climate in which they occurred. Secondly, an accompanying overview of existing research into this topic will be provided, including both historical analysis of the period and the peace movement, and sociological studies focussing more closely on the peace movement, its development, composition, and mobilisation structures. Finally, while the existing body of research focusses on broad social and political trends and the development of the peace movement as a mass-mobilised protest movement, this chapter aims to provide a closer analysis of the roles and obligations of engaged writers in relation to the peace movement in general, as well as providing context for analysis in this project's specific case studies.

With this in mind, my overview of the peace movement in this period is divided into two main sections, firstly looking into the political context surrounding this development, both in the international environment in which it occurred, and with more specific analysis of the situation in West Germany.

Following on from this, the second section presents an historical overview of the movement, its development over the course of the period in question, mobilisation and prevailing lines of argumentation. This chapter therefore aims to provide the basis on which further expansions can be made over the course of the rest of this project.

2.1. Political context

To begin this overview, the historical context in which the peace movement of the 1980s emerged will be considered. This analysis focusses on three key areas, namely the mounting Cold War tensions in this period, West Germany's position in international politics, and a brief outline of internal West German politics in this period.

2.1.1. The 'Second Cold War'

The first and clearest element of the political context which catalysed the development of the West German peace movement was the spike in tensions between the Eastern and Western blocs in the late 1970s and early 1980s, termed the 'Second Cold War', in the analysis of Philipp Gassert et al.⁶ This marked the end of the relative tranquillity of *Détente* from the later 1960s and 1970s, and heralded a new era of ever-expanding nuclear arsenals, the development of new doctrines for both nuclear and conventional warfare and increasingly hard-line political rhetoric. The prospect of a third world war centring on the two German states therefore appeared to once again be a real possibility.

⁶ Philipp Gassert, Tim Geiger and Hermann Wentker, *Zweiter Kalter Krieg und Friedensbewegung: Der NATO-Doppelbeschluss in deutsch-deutscher und internationaler Perspektive* (Munich: Oldenbourg, 2011).

A demonstration can be found in the progression of the ominously-titled Doomsday Clock – a symbolic representation of ‘threats to the survival and development of humanity’ devised by the Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists:⁷

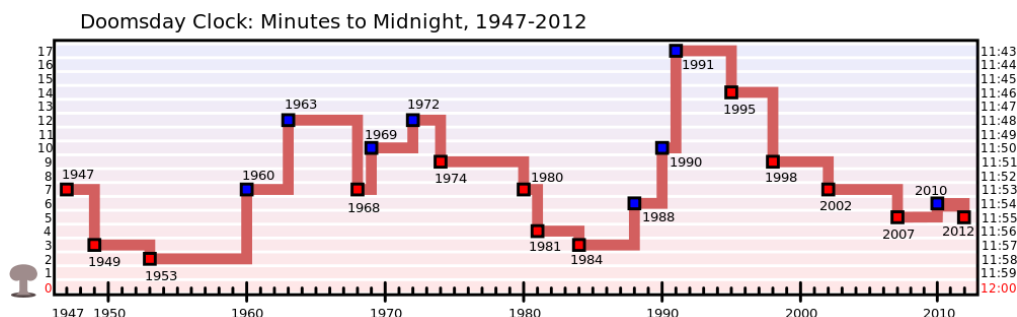


Fig.1⁸

While providing a striking graphical representation of the risks to human civilisation as assessed by the organisation, this was not entirely abstract reckoning, and was based on a number of key developments in Cold War relations and crises, several of which centred on the two German states and the issue of nuclear armament in the European theatre.

On 12 December 1979, as a result of growing concerns over the balance of military power in Europe, a proposal known as the Double Track Decision or *Doppelbeschluss* was put forward by NATO leaders to their counterparts in the Warsaw Pact offering limitations on medium and intermediate range nuclear weapons in the European theatre, backed by the threat of stationing additional weapons platforms including the newly-

⁷ Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists, ‘Purpose’
<http://www.thebulletin.org/content/about-us/purpose> [accessed 6 June 2013].

⁸ Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists, ‘Doomsday Clock Timeline’
<http://www.thebulletin.org/content/doomsday-clock/timeline> [accessed 29 June 2012].

developed MGM-31 Pershing II and BGM-109G Gryphon missiles in Western Europe if this offer were rejected.⁹ This was indeed the case, leading to the stationing of these weapons in the Federal Republic from 1983.¹⁰ Shortly after this ultimatum, tensions were further inflamed by the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan, thus confirming the end of Détente and the beginning of a new phase in Cold War tensions.

These overt military interventions were accompanied by a decidedly more confrontational attitude in the rhetoric of figures such as the newly-elected US President Ronald Reagan, not only in terms of foreign policy with the Reagan Doctrine's stated aim of 'rolling back' Soviet influence around the world,¹¹ but also in absolutist moral terms, most infamously in the description of the Soviet Union as nothing short of an 'Evil Empire'.¹² For the citizens of the Federal Republic, this was compounded by the foreseeable position of both East and West Germany at the epicentre of a possible war. Whether as a continuation of West Germany's position as an object to be fought over on the international stage,¹³ a flashpoint in which a war could once again be

⁹ 'Kommuniqué der Außen- und Verteidigungsminister der NATO über den bedingten Beschluß zur Stationierung von Mittelstreckenwaffen ["NATO-Doppelbeschluß"]', 1979 <<http://www.documentarchiv.de/in/natodb.html>> [accessed 10 July 2012].

¹⁰ John Cartwright and North Atlantic Assembly, *Cruise, Pershing, and SS-20: The Search for Consensus: Nuclear Weapons in Europe* (London; Washington, D.C: Brassey's Defence Publishers, 1985), p. 65.

¹¹ James M. Scott, *Deciding to Intervene: The Reagan Doctrine and American Foreign Policy* (Durham, N.C: Duke University Press, 1996), p. 12.

¹² Paul Halsall, 'Modern History Sourcebook: Ronald Reagan: Evil Empire Speech, June 8, 1982' (Fordham University, 1998) <<http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/mod/1982reagan1.asp>> [accessed 8 July 2012].

¹³ K. Stuart Parkes, *Writers and Politics in Germany, 1945-2008* (Rochester, NY: Camden House, 2009), p. 24.

triggered,¹⁴ or as a protective glacis for the rest of Western Europe,¹⁵ it appeared clear that in the event of conventional or nuclear conflict in the European theatre, its focus would be there, and that the level of destruction would be unavoidably high.

This evaluation of the proximity of nuclear war, with the doomsday clock reaching its nadir for the period in 1984, was no exaggeration, as declassified records of numerous near misses reveal how such a conflict almost became a reality. Events which came perilously close to triggering a nuclear exchange included a temporary crisis caused by a single faulty component in North American Aerospace Defence Command computer systems mistakenly displaying an alert for incoming Soviet ICBMs,¹⁶ a similar false alarm by Soviet satellite surveillance interpreting sunlight reflected from cloud formations as American missiles being launched, which almost triggered a retaliatory strike,¹⁷ and again during the NATO command post exercise Able Archer in the winter of 1983 due to fears among upper echelons of the USSR's

¹⁴ Eckart Conze, *Die Suche nach Sicherheit : Eine Geschichte der Bundesrepublik Deutschland von 1949 bis in die Gegenwart* (Munich: Siedler, 2009), p. 517.

¹⁵ Manfred Funke, 'Der belagerte Primat politischen Denkens, Anmerkungen zur Realitätsverdrängung in der Abschreckungsdoktrin und in den alternativen Verteidigungskonzepten', in *Friedensbewegungen: Entwicklung und Folgen in der Bundesrepublik Deutschland, Europa und den USA*, by J. Janning, H.J. Legrand, and H. Zander (Cologne: Verlag Wissenschaft und Politik, 1986), pp. 86–92.

¹⁶ Scott Douglas Sagan, *The Limits of Safety: Organizations, Accidents, and Nuclear Weapons* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1993), p. 210.

¹⁷ Benjamin Bidder, 'Der Mann, der den Dritten Weltkrieg verhinderte', *Spiegel Online*, 21 April 2010 <<http://www.spiegel.de/einestages/vergessener-held-a-948852.html>> [accessed 15 June 2012].

strategic command that this military mobilisation would be used as a cover for launching a real attack on the Soviet Union.¹⁸

Fortunately, this final stage of the Cold War resulted in something of an anti-climax. The rising tide of tensions and likelihood of apocalyptic nuclear war ended, (to borrow a phrase from T.S. Eliot) not with a bang but a whimper.¹⁹ While the analyses of Schmitt²⁰ and Leif²¹ agree that elements of West German political developments played a role in the de-escalation of threat in the late 1980s, with the latter stressing the importance of ‘den weltweiten Protesten der Friedensbewegung’ in maintaining the visibility of the issues of threat, war and armament in public discourse along with additional support for political developments, other analyses attribute the real end of the Second Cold War to developments independent of protest politics. Eckart Conze identifies the deciding factors which brought about the end of this period of threat as the ‘Abrüstungspolitik mit Gorbatschews Sowjetunion ab 1985’ and subsequent cooperation between the Eastern and Western blocs, leading to the establishment of further measures including wide-reaching treaties and withdrawal of strategic forces from Europe and elsewhere.²² This is reinforced by Klaus von Schubert’s evaluation of the post-1985 situation, which emphasises the role of diplomacy between the Eastern and Western

¹⁸ Stephen J. Cimbala, *Through a Glass Darkly: Looking at Conflict Prevention, Management, and Termination* (Westport, Conn: Praeger, 2001), p. 30.

¹⁹ T. S. Eliot, ‘The Hollow Men’, in *The Complete Poems & Plays* (London: CPI Group, 2004), pp. 81–86 (p. 86).

²⁰ Rüdiger Schmitt, *Die Friedensbewegung in der Bundesrepublik Deutschland: Ursachen und Bedingungen der Mobilisierung einer neuen sozialen Bewegung* (Opladen: Westdeutscher Verlag, 1990), p. 293.

²¹ Thomas Leif, *Die strategische (Ohn-) Macht der Friedensbewegung: Kommunikations- und Entscheidungsstrukturen in den achtziger Jahren* (Opladen: Westdeutscher Verlag, 1990), p. 243.

²² Conze, p. 543.

blocs as the primary factor in bringing about ‘stabilisierenden Maßnahmen der Rüstungskontrolle, des Strukturwandels und der Abrüstung’,²³ and presents the impact of protest actions as marginal at best.

This retreat from East-West confrontation was further accelerated by the collapse of the Eastern bloc and breakup of the Soviet Union over the years 1989-1991, leading to the possibility of nuclear war fading from public consciousness, to be replaced with more pressing issues, most notably the questions of German reunification and the post-Cold War state of international relations.

With these developments, the Second Cold War was over. The peace movement saw many of its goals achieved, though not necessarily as a result of peace protests or with the means put forward by the movement, with the hotly debated Pershing II missiles withdrawn from West German territory under the terms of the 1987 Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces Treaty,²⁴ and with the processes of nuclear disarmament and de-escalation well under way as a result of further international treaties and policy changes in East and West reflecting the new post-Soviet and post-Cold War status quo.

Following these developments, it would be all too easy to conclude that the acts of engagement at the heart of this project turned out to be unnecessary

²³ Klaus von Schubert, ‘Sicherheitspolitik und Bundeswehr’, in *Die Geschichte der Bundesrepublik Deutschland 1. 1. Politik*, ed. by Wolfgang Benz (Frankfurt am Main: Fischer, 1989), pp. 279–324 (pp. 315–16).

²⁴ ‘TREATY BETWEEN THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA AND THE UNION OF SOVIET SOCIALIST REPUBLICS ON THE ELIMINATION OF THEIR INTERMEDIATE-RANGE AND SHORTER-RANGE MISSILES’, 1987

<<http://www.state.gov/www/global/arms/treaties/inf1.html#treaty>> [accessed 20 December 2014].

due to the eventual resolution of the situation, or in retrospect, ‘dass die Furcht vor der neuerlichen Kriegskatastrophe in mancher Hinsicht unbegründet war’.²⁵ However, these conclusions overlook many important issues going beyond the simple resolution of the international tensions in this period. While these issues were in the end resolved and the movement itself underwent a clear decline after this period, the mass mobilisation of the peace movement and the influence of the issues it raised in public and political debates show its key importance in the politics and society of the Federal Republic in this period.

2.1.2. West German roles and NATO commitments

Following on from the outline of developments in an international context, the question of the place of West Germany in relation to these wider geopolitical developments must also be considered. Because of the driving role of Cold War tensions and relations in this period, this West German involvement is primarily framed through its commitments to NATO and collaboration with other West European powers in relation to security policies. One particularly important aspect of this debate over the double-track decision and stationing of missiles centred on the question of West German agency and the role expected of the Federal Republic in security policy decisions and their implementation. This debate saw widespread media coverage, from the *Tagesspiegel*’s report on the decision as a demonstration of the ‘politischen Willen’ and solidarity between the USA and European members of NATO,²⁶ to the conception of the

²⁵ Gassert, Geiger and Wentker, *Zweiter Kalter Krieg und Friedensbewegung*, p. 9.

²⁶ J.B., ‘Unsere Meinung: Der NATO-Beschluß’, *Der Tagesspiegel*, 13 December 1979, 10405 edn, p. 1.

decision as a reactive measure to Soviet aggression, as in Lothar Ruehl's warning in *die Zeit* concerning 'die weltweit gegebene Bedrohung der Unabhängigkeit und Sicherheit der westlichen Industrienationen' posed by 'der sowjetischen Mittelstreckenraketenrüstung mit modernen SS 20-Raketen'.²⁷ In either case, and in several other interpretations of the double-track decision, the contribution of the Federal Republic to the decision-making process was presented as minimal at best.

However, while the contribution to the decision itself may not have been particularly influential, the development of the double-track decision and its public discussion shows the central importance of the Federal Republic in NATO's defensive policy, with the active participation of the Schmidt administration in organising the stationing of missiles reinforcing the position of Bonn 'als der Wortführer Westeuropas für Kernwaffenrüstungen'.²⁸

Therefore, while West Germany lacked influence on the topic of whether this decision was made, the topic of how it was implemented was much more open. Thus, the questions of West German agency and NATO commitments were far from black and white issues, and their influence on the peace movement's activities and argumentation is similarly nuanced, as the following chapters will demonstrate.

2.1.3. West German internal politics

The final element of the political context in which the peace movement developed in this period deals with issues even closer to home, centring on

²⁷ Lothar Ruehl, 'Der politische Ernstfall', *Die Zeit*, 14 December 1979, 51 edn, p. 5.

²⁸ Kurt Becker, 'Beschluß in Brüssel: Nato-Rezept: Rüsten, Reden, Abrüsten', *Die Zeit*, 14 December 1979, 51 edn, p. 1.

internal political developments in the Federal Republic. As with the examination of the international context, this section does not aim to give a close analysis of all political developments during this period – a range of complete analyses of the history of West Germany in the twentieth century have been undertaken by Benz, Conze, and Wirsching,²⁹ to name but a few. Instead, the aim of this subsection is to provide an overview of political developments in the Federal Republic relevant to the peace movement and engaged writers in this period.

The first element of the West German political landscape in this period which proved to be somewhat problematic for the peace movement was the fact that, as Schmitt argues, ‘der wichtigste Antagonist der Friedensbewegung war naturgemäß die *Bundesregierung*’.³⁰ However, this antagonistic relationship was complicated by the fact that the government at the time of the movement’s beginnings in 1979 was formed of an SPD/FDP coalition under the chancellorship of Helmut Schmidt. As Parkes argues, this led to a particular unease between the SPD and elements of the peace movement, which included SPD members, other social democracy-aligned elements, and perhaps most relevantly for this project, writers with direct connections to the SPD such as Günter Grass, who had been a prominent supporter in the previous chancellor Willy Brandt’s election campaigns.³¹ Moreover, this unease was further exacerbated by divisions within the SPD itself, with the increasing enthusiasm for militaristic policies on the part of the Chancellor

²⁹ Wolfgang Benz, *Die Geschichte der Bundesrepublik Deutschland* (Frankfurt am Main: Fischer Taschenbuch, 1989); Conze; Andreas Wirsching, *Abschied vom Provisorium, 1982-1990* (Munich: Deutsche Verlags-Anstalt, 2006).

³⁰ Schmitt, p. 177.

³¹ Parkes, *Writers and Politics in Germany, 1945-2008*, p. 58.

challenged by other party members including Willy Brandt, Oskar Lafontaine, and Erhard Eppler. This did not go unnoticed in public discussion of the governmental approach to the issues raised by the peace movement, as can be seen in the articles discussing divisions with respect to the party line³² along with accusations of dubious alliances between elements of the SPD and communist factions and general 'Unfrieden' within the party in the face of peace protests.³³

The 1982 elections which brought a new CDU/CSU government into office under the chancellorship of Helmut Kohl resulted in a somewhat simplified situation for both the SPD and related elements of the peace movement, as Schmitt argues:

Der Verlust der Regierungsmacht 1982 brachte schließlich für die SPD die entscheidende Wende. Befreit vom übergeordneten Interesse an der Unterstützung einer von der eigenen Partei gestellten Bundesregierung begann nun die Haltung der Gesamtpartei umzuschwenken. Gleichzeitig gewannen innerhalb der SPD Argumentationsmuster Raum, die jenen der Friedensbewegung ähnelten.³⁴

As Schmitt's analysis shows, it became possible after 1982 to frame the new CDU-led government in a more antagonistic role following the SPD's transition to an opposition party, even while the main issues raised by the peace movement stemmed from decisions made by the previous Schmidt

³² Gottfried Capell, 'Die Opposition machte sich mit Vergnügen zur Stütze des Kanzlers', *Die Welt*, 10 October 1981, 236 edn, p. 4.

³³ Rolf Zundel, 'Der Friedensmarsch stiftet Unfrieden', *Die Zeit*, 9 October 1981, 42 edn, p. 1.

³⁴ Schmitt, p. 139.

administration, while the internal discussion in the SPD was able to become much more open to the issues related to the peace movement.³⁵

This relationship between political parties and the peace movement was further complicated in this period by the formation of the Greens in West Germany and the entry of the ‘anti-party party’ into the political mainstream,³⁶ along with growing electoral successes in both the Bundestag and European elections for organisations aligned with or sympathetic to the peace movement including the Friedensliste.³⁷ The increasing prominence of protest politics and frequent collaboration between ecological and peace protesters, both in terms of group efforts and in the involvement of specific individuals, played a critical role in establishing and maintaining the environment in which the Greens were able to flourish, growing in the short span of 1980-1998 from a minor ecologically-minded party to a major Bundestag faction and eventually coalition partner with the SPD.³⁸

However, relations between the mainstream parties and the peace movement remained far from simple throughout this period, even going beyond the involvement of the Greens. An additional problematic involvement of political parties and ideology can be found in the involvement of communist groups, particularly the Deutsche Kommunistische Partei (DKP) with the

³⁵ Schmitt, p. 177.

³⁶ Ingolfur Blühdorn, ‘Option Grün: Bündis 90/Die Grünen at the Dawn of New Opportunities?’, *German Politics & Society*, 27.2 (2009), pp. 45–62 (p. 50).

³⁷ Statistisches Bundesamt Wiesbaden, ‘Die Wahlbewerber für die Wahl zum Europäischen Parlament aus der Bundesrepublik Deutschland’, in: *Wahl der Abgeordneten des Europäischen Parlaments aus der Bundesrepublik Deutschland Am 17. Juni 1984. Sonderheft.*, 1984, pp. 69–73.

³⁸ ‘30 Grüne Jahre (1): Gründung der Grünen’ (Die Grünen, 2010) <<http://www.gruene.de/partei/30-gruene-jahre-30-gruene-geschichten/30-gruene-jahre-1-gruendung-der-gruenen.html>> [accessed 25 June 2013].

peace movement. As Leif argues in his analysis of the peace movement's constituent groups, the Komitee für Frieden, Abrüstung und Zusammenarbeit (KOFAZ) represented a spectrum of 'DKP nahestehenden Organisationen', and presented a dilemma for the peace movement as a whole.³⁹ On the one hand, the KOFAZ represented a significant stream of mobilisation for the peace movement, both in terms of mobilising its own members and in assisting the organisation of protest activities and mass demonstrations, most notably the demonstrations in Bonn which are examined in greater detail in Chapter 5 of this project. This mobilisation and involvement with the peace movement also included a number of engaged writers ranging from figures directly involved with the DKP such as Peter Schütt, to others who sympathised with elements of the organisation to a greater or lesser extent. On the other hand, this involvement proved to be problematic in terms of cohesion, both in terms of competition with other political parties such as the SPD and the Greens, and as Leif identifies, 'inhaltliche Widersprüche' resulting from the conflicting priorities and goals of the KOFAZ spectrum and the peace movement's other diverse constituent groups.⁴⁰ Additionally, the involvement of the DKP and affiliated groups also served to define the minimal consensus on which the peace movement's collaborative organisation structure was based, drawing discussions away from criticisms of socialism or the Soviet Union's policies. The controversies stemming from these involvements of specific political parties and individuals' attitudes towards them will play an important role in this project's case studies.

³⁹ Leif, p. 41.

⁴⁰ Leif, p. 46.

As with the peace movement itself, the discussion in political circles of the issues surrounding war, peace and nuclear armament began to wane in the years following 1983. Mirroring the international situation, the topics of the peace movement were gradually replaced in the political area not because of a single great victory or defeat of the movement, but rather because of the eclipsing effect of new international and domestic challenges arising, which eventually led to an almost total overshadowing of the peace movement's issues with the advent of questions of reunification and accompanying redefinition of the 'German question' in European politics. However, as Parkes proposes, the peace movement's influence on national political discussion was by no means irrelevant:

A good twenty years later, what is one to make of these debates? There is no doubt that there was a major concern about peace [...] Moreover, the wider pressure exerted by the peace movement certainly kept politicians on their toes in both German states. Chancellor Kohl, for instance, responded to the peace movement's call to create peace without weapons by speaking of achieving the same goal with fewer weapons.⁴¹

This influence on political discourse, along with the more general effect of keeping politicians and other figures on their toes in relation to the important questions of war and peace attest to the importance of the peace movement and its supporters in these discussions, as the following chapters will argue. This perspective is supported and even taken further in other analyses of the influence of the peace movement in West German politics, such

⁴¹ Parkes, *Writers and Politics in Germany, 1945-2008*, p. 123.

as Eckart Conze's *die Suche nach Sicherheit*, which argues that the peace movement in the 1980s was remarkable partly for its ability to unite 'die heterogenen, politisch, gesellschaftlich und kulturell ganz unterschiedlichen Protestgruppen' into the single largest protest movement in the history of the Federal Republic.⁴² Conze argues that the widespread support and influence of the peace movement in West German politics and society went beyond keeping politicians on their toes, and helped to express a deep dissatisfaction with long-standing security policies, thereby leading not only to reorganisation in achieving the same defensive goal with fewer weapons, but re-evaluating the goal itself in the context of changing internal and external political situations. While Conze's analysis retains an emphasis on these political developments as the leading factors in the ending of the Cold War, the active engagement of the peace movement is also presented as having played an influential role in political and social developments in the Federal Republic.

These perspectives on the effectiveness of the peace movement's activities are however far from universally accepted. The effects of the peace movement's protests are regarded as more marginalised in other analyses of the political and social developments in this period. This can be seen in the emphasis placed on governmental policies adapting to the changing security situation towards the end of the Cold War. For instance, Klaus von Schubert presents the role of the peace movement as a somewhat tangential concern, arguing that while it brought up discussions on the legitimacy of Western security policies and the role of the Bundeswehr along with conventional military forces in general, fundamental changes in these areas were brought

⁴² Conze, p. 540.

about almost exclusively through changes in the international political and strategic landscape.⁴³

It is difficult to set out exact metrics for the influence of the peace movement and its contributors on West German politics and society in this period, and in any case this project focusses more on the forms of engagement and contributions to the peace movement than attempting to undertake such an evaluation of impact. While no general consensus on the wider roles and effects of the peace movement is to be found in the range of analyses of this period, the central arguments in this project side more with Parkes and Conze in terms of viewing the peace movement and the varied forms of engagement with it as influential factors in internal West German politics.

2.2. Historical overview of the peace movement

The overview of political developments in this period only gives part of the context needed for this project, however. In order to gain a more complete perspective over the issues at hand, it is necessary to look further into the historical development of the peace movement itself in this period. As with Section 2.1., the goal of this section is to provide the necessary background details for the environment in which the issues analysed in my thesis took place. In order to achieve this, two main elements must be considered, namely the structural development of the movement and the streams of mobilisation which supported it.

⁴³ von Schubert, p. 315.

2.2.1. Development and protest actions

Perhaps the most important detail concerning the West German peace movement of the 1980s which should be borne in mind is that the idea of a unified, singular protest movement is something of a simplification. Instead, as is emphasised in Thomas Leif's analysis of the movement's organisational makeup, the peace movement in this period was composed of a multitude of contributing groups ranging from social democrats and Christians to ecological groups and anti-fascists among many other organisations and independent supporters, often with wildly divergent and sometimes conflicting goals, ideals, and favoured methods of action.⁴⁴ An important aspect of the movement's organisational development from its inception around 1979 to its general decline after 1983 was, as Leif argues, its '*Minimalkonsens*' or minimal consensus,⁴⁵ which provided the narrow basis for cooperation centred on common interests.

The first issue in this period around which this consensus between the vying factions of the peace movement could be built was also the event which marked the beginning of the Second Cold War as has been discussed above, namely the double-track decision of 12 December 1979. This function as a rallying point for opponents of nuclear armament and other elements affiliated with the peace movement is taken further in Josef Janning's analysis of the 'new' peace movement's development through this period, stating that it

⁴⁴ Leif, pp. 29–30.

⁴⁵ Ibid., p. 240.

originated as an ‘Ein-Punkt-Bewegung gegen den NATO Doppelbeschluss’.⁴⁶ This does not however mean that there was a complete lack of interest in the broader issues extending beyond increasing armament, as Janning elaborates further that this minimal consensus formed the core of a varied movement, several elements of which were very much dedicated to these deeper issues of war and peace.⁴⁷ While the varied factions involved in the movement frequently disagreed on priorities and the necessary approaches to wider issues, the identification of a collective ‘Friedensbewegung’ as an umbrella term was widely used from the beginning of this period, both within the movement itself and in wider public and political discussion.

Another point which is stressed in Janning’s analysis is that while the double-track decision and the subsequent armament debates served as the main catalyst for the peace movement’s development in this era, the movement itself did not simply appear ‘aus dem Nichts’, and was instead able to draw on pre-existing concerns extending back to the social movements of the 1960s and peace movements of the 1950s,⁴⁸ demonstrating a form of continuity or at least influence. These are also identified by Leif’s analysis of the protest potential drawn on by the movement⁴⁹ and are given further support in the predictions put forward in Robert Jungk’s *Der Atom-Staat*:

Viele der Vorstellungen stammen aus der Gegenkultur und der Studentenbewegung. [...] Es ist einfach falsch, wenn immer wieder

⁴⁶ J. Janning, ‘Die neue Friedensbewegung 1980–1986’, by J. Janning, H.J. Legrand, and H. Zander (Cologne: Verlag Wissenschaft und Politik, 1986), pp. 36–54 (p. 39).

⁴⁷ Ibid., p. 40.

⁴⁸ Janning, p. 37.

⁴⁹ Leif, p. 240.

behauptet wird, die Aufbrüche der sechziger Jahre seien zu Ende, seien »tot«. Sie sind in andere soziale Schichten eingedrungen und stellen sich daher zur Zeit nach außen hin weniger auffällig dar.⁵⁰

Although not precisely predicting the development of these pressures and this dissatisfaction into the New Social Movements in the 1980s and beyond, Jungk reinforces Janning's finding that the previous protest movements and the peace movement of the 1980s were not separate phenomena, with both drawing from the critical attitudes which had led to the protests in previous decades but had not faded away entirely by the end of these previous movements. However, the implication that the transformation of these pressures into other areas could lead to similar countercultures and protest flashpoints turned out to be somewhat less accurate, at least in terms of the peace movement. Although drawing on similar concerns, and sharing some critical perspectives of West German politics and society, the development and structures of the peace movement in the 1980s marked a significant difference between it and the student protest movements of the 1960s, which along with the markedly different context of the late Cold War undermined the sense of continuity or simple progression from one to the other.

A nebulous form of support for the peace movement is also identified in Schmitt's analysis of protest mobilisation in the late 1970s, with the potential for further engagement existing around 1979. However, due to the difficulties posed by a lack of central rallying points:

⁵⁰ Robert Jungk, *Der Atom-Staat: Vom Fortschritt in die Unmenschlichkeit*, 2nd edn (Munich: Kindler, 1977), p. 185.

Offensichtlich gelang es zu diesem Zeitpunkt noch nicht, mit der Friedensthematik große Menschenmengen zu Protestaktivitäten zu mobilisieren.⁵¹

The catalytic effect of the double-track decision can therefore be seen more as a cohesive influence, bringing together and reinforcing the previously spread out elements of the peace movement, leading to the first stage of the new peace movement, identified by Janning as the 'Diskussionsphase', characterised by efforts to bring together ideas pertaining to the themes of war, peace and nuclear armament on the one hand, and the earliest stages of the planning of protest actions on the other.⁵²

This discussion phase was relatively short-lived, as a combination of increasing support for the movement and increasing public discussion of the issues at hand led to the rapid development of the movement into an 'Appellationsphase' lasting from 1980 to 1981 and based mainly on – as Janning's title and Schmitt's elaboration suggest – less intensive forms of protest such as petitions and written appeals.⁵³ Janning identifies the campaigns 'Frieden schaffen ohne Waffen',⁵⁴ 'Mainzer Appell zur Verantwortung für den Frieden',⁵⁵ and 'Krefelder Appell'⁵⁶ as particularly prominent in this phase,

⁵¹ Schmitt, p. 15.

⁵² Janning, p. 44.

⁵³ Schmitt, p. 15.

⁵⁴ Kirsten Heckmann-Janz, 'Frieden Schaffen ohne Waffen' (Deutschlandradio Kultur, 2012)

<<http://www.dradio.de/dkultur/sendungen/kalenderblatt/1657193/>> [accessed 14 January 2013].

⁵⁵ *Verantwortung Für Den Frieden: Naturwissenschaftler Gegen Atomrüstung*, Spiegel-Buch (Reinbek bei Hamburg: Rowohlt, 1983), p. 349.

⁵⁶ Christoph Strässer, 'Der Krefelder Appell', in *Frieden in Deutschland: Die Friedensbewegung: Wie sie wurde, was sie ist, was sie werden kann:*[mit den

each of which was chiefly supported by different demographic groups and included engagement by writers to at least some degree.⁵⁷

This appeals phase was however in Janning's view something of a transitional stage, as the 'Durchbruch in der Öffentlichkeit'⁵⁸ provided by the 1981 demonstration in Bonn attended by 300,000 protesters marked the beginning of a new 'Aktionsphase' or action phase going beyond minimal consensus, with successful efforts to unite the varied organisations and mobilisation potentials which made up the peace movement in a coordinated, interlinked manner in Bonn and with subsequent demonstrations. This new phase centred on broadly supported mass demonstrations across local, regional and national levels reached its zenith with the 1983 'Aktionswoche', in which more than a million participants across the Federal Republic took part in mass demonstrations in Bonn, West Berlin and Hamburg, along with an array of other protests across the country including blockade actions and a human chain between Stuttgart and Neu-Ulm.⁵⁹

These protests received widespread media coverage, and as could be expected, evaluations of their efficacy and basic validity were varied. A range of articles during and immediately following the 'Aktionswoche' portrayed the protests as an overwhelming success, with notable reference to the mobilisation of 'Eine Million Friedensdemonstranten'⁶⁰ and the efforts put into the record-breaking 108km long human chain formed by around 200,000

Adressen von über 2300 Initiativen und Institutionen] (Munich: Wilhelm Goldmann, 1982), p. 87.

⁵⁷ Janning, p. 44.

⁵⁸ Leif, p. 2.

⁵⁹ Janning, p. 46.

⁶⁰ Von unserer Bonner Redaktion, 'Eine Million Friedensdemonstranten', *Süddeutsche Zeitung*, 24 October 1983, 245 edn, pp. 1–2.

protesters, described as an ‘Erfolg auf der ganzen Linie’.⁶¹ Additionally, the fact that these protests were conducted peacefully was at the centre of coverage and discussion across the political spectrum, with reports that the ‘Bonner Blockaden verlaufen friedlich’⁶² and implications of the successful avoidance of violence and extremism with a single minor exception in Hamburg⁶³ shown in a similar light to the 1981 Bonn demonstration as examples of influential democratic protest in the pages of *die Zeit* and the *Süddeutsche Zeitung*. Even the often disapproving *Welt* admitted that concerns over rioting proved to be unfounded as the peaceful demonstrations were carried out as planned and ‘fast überall friedlich’,⁶⁴ although the failure of certain blockade actions in Bonn and Hamburg⁶⁵ was also mentioned, along with questioning of truly non-violent protest strategies, including a suggestion from the President of the Federal Constitutional Court Ernst Benda that any public demonstration which disrupted the ‘Recht auf freie Bewegung’ of other citizens constituted an act of violence – a stretch of the term, to say the least.⁶⁶

Although achieving considerable mobilisation of mass support for the varied protest actions across the country, the success of this highpoint in the peace movement’s action phase on a strategic level was more questionable. While the mobilisation of so many supporters for direct protest actions without

⁶¹ Wulf Reimer, ‘Das Glücksgefühl Nach Dem Erfolg Auf Der Ganzen Linie’, *Süddeutsche Zeitung*, 24 October 1983, 245 edn, p. 3.

⁶² [Bonn (Reuter)], ‘Bonner Blockaden verlaufen friedlich’, *Süddeutsche Zeitung*, 22 October 1983, 244 edn, pp. 1–2.

⁶³ Michael Schwelien, ‘Eine ganz andere Zukunft könnte Beginnen’, *Die Zeit*, 13 October 1983, 42 edn, section Politisches Buch, p. 28.

⁶⁴ DW. Bonn, ‘Hunderttauende demonstrierten Friedlich’, *Die Welt*, 24 October 1983, 248 edn, pp. 1, 12 (p. 1).

⁶⁵ W.K./DW. Bonn, ‘Zu einer Blockade kam es nicht’, *Die Welt*, 22 October 1983, 247 edn, pp. 1, 8 (p. 1).

⁶⁶ W.K./DW. Bonn, p. 8.

violence certainly avoided the potential risk of derailment by extremist elements, the cohesive organisational framework underpinning the demonstrations may have limited their effectiveness, as Dieter Buhl argued in a *Zeit* editorial:

Die politischen Meteorologen haben bisher mit ihren Vorhersagen falsch gelegen. Nicht Straßenkrawalle und Scherbenklirren, sondern Gebete und Gesänge bestimmten die Kundgebungen der Anti-Raketen-Saison.⁶⁷

In spite of the unprecedented mobilisation achieved by the 1983 ‘Aktionswoche’, a pressing issue of expectations became apparent which had not been a problem for the 1981 Bonn protests. Unlike the earlier demonstration which marked the beginning of the action phase, the 1983 protests were essentially a continuation of an established series of mass mobilisations differing in magnitude rather than in kind from previous actions. Accordingly, when the hurricane of violence forecast by the ‘politischen Meteorologen’ failed to materialise, their aftermath left a hint of disappointment in spite of their other successes. This was further compounded by the arrival of Pershing II missiles in West Germany shortly after the end of the protest week, which left the peace movement facing a particularly problematic question: ‘Wie geht es weiter nach den Demonstrationen?’⁶⁸

The clearest answer to this question, as Schmitt demonstrates, was that after the ‘steilen Zuwachs an aktiver Unterstützung’ during the action phase,

⁶⁷ Dieter Buhl, ‘Für Entwarnung ist es noch zu früh’, *Die Zeit*, 21 October 1983, 43 edn, p. 1.

⁶⁸ Theo Sommer, ‘Und nun kommen Raketen’, *Die Zeit*, 28 October 1983, 44 edn, p. 1.

‘verlor die Friedensbewegung nach 1983 rasch wieder an Substanz’.⁶⁹ This can be attributed to a number of factors, ranging from the realisation of the double-track decision with the stationing of Pershing II missiles in West Germany symbolising the defeat of the peace movement in its central, unifying area of debate,⁷⁰ to an overextension and subsequent lack of momentum following the 1983 protests.⁷¹ The disintegration among the various factions of the movement also proved to be a problem in the post-1983 period. Manfred Funke argues that the movement was placed in a difficult position between the twin possibilities of diminishing and radicalisation following the loss of the minimal consensus which had bound its contributors together throughout the previous phases.⁷² A course between these poles was however navigated by certain elements of the peace movement after 1983. As a solution to the problems posed by this position, Janning identifies the period immediately following the rapid loss in mobilisation potential after 1983 as something of a pause for breath for the movement, followed by a variety of new directions in which the groups and individuals who had contributed to the movement developed in the period 1984-1986, amounting not to a disappearance or a radicalisation of the peace movement, but instead to a diversification.⁷³ This, Janning argues, was in accordance with the cyclical nature of the development of protest movements in the post-war period, being brought together with common purpose for sustained campaigns only to develop further into different

⁶⁹ Schmitt, p. 18.

⁷⁰ Schmitt, p. 55.

⁷¹ Sommer, ‘Und nun kommen Raketen’.

⁷² Funke, p. 90.

⁷³ Janning, p. 50.

discussions and debates once the original points of consensus underwent change themselves.

Thus, just as the previous movements of the 1950s and 1960s developed further to the point of influencing later movements elsewhere without the total disappearance of their underlying concerns, the peace movement of the 1980s underwent diversification over the course of the mid to late 1980s and even more so after the end of the Cold War, as the debates surrounding the threat of war and nuclear armament gave way to a new set of issues and debates.

2.2.2. Mobilisation

Following on from the developmental stages of the peace movement, the question of its mobilisation potential and actualisation must also be addressed. As was noted in the previous section, this mobilisation was often limited by the general reach of the peace movement as a whole, with the lack of unified organisational structures before 1979 corresponding to a low mobilisation potential at a local level. Furthermore, the increase in visibility and reach of the peace movement over the course of its transition into the action phase was accompanied by a similar increase in mobilisation, followed by an equally sharp decline following its 1983 highpoint. The connection between the peace movement's stages of development and its mobilisation potential was not however a simply linear affair, because of the multi-faceted nature of the movement's supporter base and means of mobilisation. This is particularly apparent in Leif's analysis, which divides the forms of mobilisation observed as part of the peace movement into a number of categories. Expanding on Schmitt's distinction between mild and more intensive forms of protest at the

core of the peace movement's activities,⁷⁴ Leif's categorisation of mobilisation forms is divided between general protest, *Ostermärsche* and the influence of action conferences between 1976 and 1989, each with their own level of mobilisation.⁷⁵ Although some correlation can be seen between the different elements, for instance with both the general protests and *Ostermärsche* reaching their peak in 1983 followed by a decline in mobilisation, they are identified as separate entities, with additional complications presented by the differences in organising bodies responsible for different protest actions. Thus, as was mentioned in the previous section, the varied organisational makeup of the peace movement can be seen to have had a defining effect on the forms of mobilisation drawn as well as the development of the movement itself.

This is further demonstrated with the groups represented in the coordination authority of the peace movement, in which Leif identifies ten distinct groups with organisational and structural influence on the mobilisation of the movement which emerged in the early stages of its development and proved remarkably durable despite structural changes elsewhere, namely:

1. Parteien
2. Jugendverbände
3. Koordinationsgruppen und Zusammenschlüsse
4. Frauen
5. Kriegsdienstgegner
6. Antifaschisten
7. Dritte-Welt-Gruppen

⁷⁴ Schmitt p. 15.

⁷⁵ Leif, p. 3.

8. Ökologie-Gruppen
9. Christliche Gruppen
10. Personenbündnisse/Vereinigungen⁷⁶

Furthermore, Leif's analysis shows the various subgroups into which these ten groups could be further defined, and consolidates this collection of factions into five general 'spectra' dependent on their ideological convictions and representative capabilities:

1. Die Christen
2. Die Unabhängigen
3. Das KOFAZ-Spektrum
4. Sozialdemokraten
5. Die Grünen⁷⁷

This categorisation provides four particularly interesting insights into the mobilisation structures of the peace movement and the way in which they functioned.

Firstly, the strikingly exact categorisation into both spectra and coordination groups reveals the specific nature of sources of mobilisation in support of the peace movement as a whole. Very little of the support mobilised by the peace movement was directly organised under the banner of the movement itself, with supporters generally brought together by specific groups or specific causes with a common interest in the central issues. This therefore highlights the importance of a consensus being established between these

⁷⁶ Leif, pp. 29–30.

⁷⁷ Ibid., pp. 32–33.

diverse groups before any form of collaborative or collective action could be agreed on and undertaken between them.

Secondly, because of these very specific forms and structures of mobilisation, the support base for the peace movement was for most of the period in question organised independently and with considerable inequality between groups and spectra. This was a direct consequence of some of the groups in question simply having more resources and greater communication networks already established, along with greater pre-existing support bases on which to draw.

Thirdly, following from these issues of specificity and inequality, it is no surprise that the groups and spectra represented in the peace movement often represented diverging and conflicting interests. This was particularly evident in instances such as the political competition between the Green and Social Democrat factions in spite of their common interests in the issues of peace and nuclear armament – and after 1982 the common position of the Greens and SPD as opposition parties to the CDU-led government. These divergent interests and goals proved to be particularly problematic for cohesion within the peace movement, occasionally to the point where the usefulness of such a wide mobilisation basis for the peace movement as a whole was debated, with fragmentation brought up as a serious risk.⁷⁸ This fragmentary nature of the peace movement's support basis was by no means limited to mass mobilising protest groups, but was also a major factor in debates between individual supporters and contributors, including engaged writers, as will be shown in the debates examined in Chapters 6 and 7 in particular.

⁷⁸ Funke, p. 88.

Finally, and most relevantly for this project, the mobilisation structures identified by Leif do not include a single specific category for writers' engagement with the peace movement in this period. One possible conclusion which could be drawn from this is that engaged writers did not exercise any particularly noteworthy influence on the mobilisation or organisation of the peace movement, and that their contributions to the movement as a whole were therefore negligible. As the following chapters will show, however, this was not in fact the case. Instead, the lack of a specific category in Leif's analysis is due to the fact that writers' contributions in this movement were not confined to single groups or spectra, and were instead spread across these categorisations with flexible forms of engagement. Moreover, this was also true for a number of other individual contributions to the movement. While the interests and mobilisation structures were at times divergent or conflicting, there was also considerable overlap, as groups such as women, political parties, or Christian organisations were by no means mutually exclusive. Thus, while specific structures and sources of mobilisation did indeed exist, Leif's analysis challenges the notion of a strictly-regimented, inflexible mobilisation and organisation structure for the movement. Furthermore, this loosely-affiliated model also easily accommodates the engagement of writers acting as independent intellectuals as in Georg Jäger's model of social and political influence,⁷⁹ engaging with one, several, or none of the major groups identified above. This diverse makeup was shared by earlier mass protest movements in

⁷⁹ Georg Jäger, 'Der Schriftsteller als Intellektueller: Ein Problemaufriß', in *Schriftsteller als Intellektuelle: Politik und Literatur im Kalten Krieg* (Tübingen, 2000), p. 4.

the 1970s, and proved to be equally relevant for the peace movement, as can be seen in Jungk's participatory experience:

Architekten, Anwälte, Ärzte, Bauarbeiter, Pfarrer, Bauern, Fischer, Apotheker, Buchhändler, Beamte, Kaufleute, Journalisten, Krankenschwestern, Lehrer, Monteure, Werbefachleute, Schauspieler und Drucker habe ich in dieser neuen Massenbewegung persönlich kennengelernt.⁸⁰

While the specific lines of mobilisation were shaped by specialised, separate groups, the parallel phenomenon of greater and more diverse personal engagement with the peace movement was also an important factor which contributed to its mobilisation basis as well as its structural development and diverse nature. However, as Leif and Janning note, this decentralised organisational structure later proved to be problematic as the peace movement grew in scope and became more susceptible to fragmentation. Aside from the fact that Jungk's evaluation was made in 1977, before the peace movement's rise to prominence, another factor affecting these different perspectives on the makeup of the movement's support base can be found in the positions of the analysts in relation to it. For Jungk as a committed member of a protest movement in the 1970s, the diverse nature of the possible support and mobilisation basis was a very positive factor, given that it entailed an increase in support, reach and a rise to further prominence for the movement itself and for Jungk's role within it. For Leif and Janning however, the drawbacks associated with this broad support base such as conflicting goals and inter-organisational bickering were more apparent.

⁸⁰ Jungk, *Der Atom-Staat*, p. 185.

This does not however mean that either Leif or Janning condemn the support base and mobilisation potential of the peace movement as detrimental to the movement's development as a whole. Despite drawing some attention to the drawbacks associated with this factor, both are in broad agreement with Schmitt's analysis, which identifies the broad mobilisation basis as a leading factor in the peace movement's ability to mobilise its support so successfully at the peak of its activity, as it tapped into two independent latent sources of support.⁸¹

The first of these potential sources of support can be found in Schmitt's evaluation of a broad lack of acceptance for both nuclear weapons and security policies which were put forward by NATO and the West German government in this period.⁸² With this, Schmitt further demonstrates the central importance of the armament debate for the general mobilisation of the peace movement. The opposition to nuclear armament and specific security policies provided an almost universal rallying point around which support could be mobilised as a reaction to political developments viewed as unacceptable or at least worrisome by a large proportion of the West German public. This therefore provided the various groups and spectra identified by Leif to reinforce their support bases with a call to resistive action, on which further development and specialisation could be built. Following this, the second of these latent mobilisation potentials identified by Schmitt was:

Die aus "postmaterialistischen" Wertorientierungen abgeleitete, offensiv auf die Realisierung eines politischen Ideals gerichtete

⁸¹ Schmitt, p. 291.

⁸² Ibid.

Präferenz für eine Neue Außenpolitik hat ihr wesentlich mehr Unterstützer zugeführt als der Nuklearpazifismus.⁸³

In a more refined fashion than the mainly reactive mobilisation against nuclear armament and security policies, this second mobilisation potential was much more active, emphasising not only resistance to these undesired policies, but also preferable replacements for them. Furthermore, Schmitt's identification of post-material values in the goals and mobilisation structures of the peace movement highlights both strengths and weaknesses of the movement's support base. As has been analysed above, the importance placed on post-material values such as peace and openness played an important role not only in mobilising support, but also in maintaining cohesion between the groups contributing to the movement. However, this emphasis also had a drawback in that post-material values conflicted with the advancement of concrete goals. Although the proposal for less confrontational foreign policy and opposition to nuclear armament in general terms drew considerable support to the movement and allowed for common ground and collaboration between disparate groups, the lack of concrete proposals for how these causes could be furthered, and of unified interpretations of core values across the movement remained problematic, and contributed to the diminishment in mobilisation capacity following the actual changes in armament and foreign policy undertaken by the government from the mid-1980s.

2.3. Summary

Following this overview of the historical development of and perspectives on the peace movement in this period, what observations can be made?

⁸³ Schmitt, p. 292.

The first element with particular relevance to the subject of writers' engagement and obligations in relation to the peace movement in this period is that the notion of a singular movement in constant opposition to governmental policies does not accurately describe the peace movement at this time. Instead, a multitude of organisations, factions, rallying points and streams of mobilisation were brought together to form the entity known as the peace movement, with the engaged writers at the heart of this study playing an important and influential role in this much larger arrangement. Accordingly, a similar observation can be made regarding the forms of obligation identified and acted upon in this context: instead of a single unifying obligation drawing writers and other protesters together under the banner of the peace movement, a similarly wide array of interpretations of obligation played important roles in the contributions of these figures to the movement as a whole, as the following chapters will demonstrate. Additionally, this heterogeneity within the peace movement also applied to its development between 1979 and 1985, as the nature of the movement, its activities and contributions to it underwent a series of important changes throughout this period. As a result of this, it is at times difficult to identify a particular theme which applies equally to all stages of the peace movement, or to generalise findings on the nature of writers' engagement and obligations to the entirety of this movement. This does not however present an insurmountable challenge, and the following chapters will take these issues into consideration in order to work towards more accurate conclusions.

The second important observation to be made from this overview of the peace movement and its organisational structures in particular is that the roles

of individuals within it are difficult to evaluate. On the one hand, this chapter has shown that one of the key characteristics of the peace movement in this period and of new social movements in general has been a move away from the importance of individual actions, with more importance placed on decentralised organisational structures, post-material values and the social trends underpinning them. This is further reinforced by the democratic arguments integral to numerous instances of protest actions and activities outlined above, and the importance of mass demonstrations and mass participation associated with them. On the other hand, in spite of these important factors which could be seen to diminish the central importance of individual contributions to the peace movement, a number of highly important roles for individual engagement on the part of writers and others were still very much in evidence over the course of the peace movement's development in this period. These included symbolic and representative roles as well as the function of speaking out and exerting influence, as will be seen over the course of this project. This does not mean that writers or other individuals should be interpreted as standing alone, or at odds with the collective goals of the peace movement. Instead, in the face of the driving forces of mass mobilisation and collective support for the peace movement, these more individualistic contributions should mainly be seen as supportive; using the means available in order to further a collective project.

Finally, in contrast with the nebulous structure of the peace movement and individual roles within it, the factor of obligation is somewhat more clearly defined. As this chapter demonstrates, the thematic basis of protest and at times reactive mobilisation of the peace movement against other developments

were closely linked to a variety of obligations as motivating factors, justifications, and as a rhetorical tool, causing these factors to play a key role in much of the movement's development. However, the question of specific obligations held and acted on by writers within the peace movement is more complex, and will form a central component of the following chapters' analysis. Additionally, the tension between the individual and collective forms of protest poses a similarly problematic question with regard to writers' involvement. Thus, an important objective of this project lies in examining these individualistic roles in relation to the specific obligations bound with them, thereby helping to determine just how much influence these factors had over the development and activities of the West German peace movement in this period.

3. Obligations

Building on the overview of the historical situation and the context in which the peace movement and its associated obligations developed, the next question which needs to be addressed is more theoretical in nature. Simply put: What is obligation, and how is it relevant to writers' engagement in this period? This chapter aims to provide a satisfactory answer to these questions by outlining and assessing a number of key theories of obligation, and from there to set out their possible applications to the wider subject of this project.

The concept of obligation is not a new one. Obligations to the state and to other authorities date back to antiquity, were an integral part of Enlightenment political thought, and remain the subject of much debate up to the present day. This is not however to say that political and other forms of obligation have been a constant factor throughout history, or exerted constant influence on social and political discourses. As A. John Simmons notes, the questions of obligation and problems relating to this topic 'have gone in and out of fashion during the course of the history of philosophy'.⁸⁴

While obligation has a long tradition as an important factor in theories of political and social order, and remains important in modern political theory, the importance of context should not be ignored, whether in terms of the discussions of obligation or the mechanics of obligations themselves. The models of obligation involved in citizenship of an ancient Greek city-state differ greatly from those in early modern societies, which in turn differ from

⁸⁴ A. John Simmons, 'Political Obligation and Authority', in *The Blackwell Guide to Social and Political Philosophy*, Blackwell Philosophy Guides (Malden, MA: Blackwell, 2002), pp. 17–37 (p. 21).

obligations in the context of contemporary democratic states, and theoretical models of obligation have undergone corresponding developments. My analysis will focus on obligation in the context of a modern liberal democratic society such as the Federal Republic of Germany, drawing on other models of obligation in other contexts chiefly for the sake of comparison, and in order to examine their development.

Despite the extensive discussion of obligation, it remains difficult to pin down exactly what is meant by the term, a problem which is compounded by the varied characteristics of different forms of obligation. While some basic characteristics may be shared, obligations between a state and its citizens are of a very different nature to obligations defined by personal or shared moral codes, which in turn differ from the equally important obligations bound to positional responsibilities. In order to organise and clarify the various definitions in this chapter, it will be useful to bear in mind the three questions identified by John Horton as central to any investigations of the topic of political obligation:

1. To whom or what do I have political obligations?
2. What are the extent and limits of these obligations?
3. What is the explanation or justification of these obligations?⁸⁵

While these questions at the heart of Horton's analysis focus solely on political obligations, this chapter will demonstrate that they are equally relevant in relation to forms of obligation based on positional and moral factors, albeit with significantly differing answers in different contexts. In

⁸⁵ John Horton, *Political Obligation* (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1992), p. 12.

order to clarify and contextualise these issues for my analysis, this chapter aims to:

1. Outline the historical importance and relevance of concepts of obligation.
2. Give a brief overview of three relevant definitions of obligation and critically analyse their formulation, importance, and limitations.
3. Examine the relevance of these theories of obligation, both as theoretical concepts and in relation to their practical application to the context of the peace movement.

The goal of this combined analysis in these areas is therefore to provide a general summary of the concept of obligation, and to show how these factors can be applied across the rest of this project. This analysis therefore supplements the previous chapter's analysis with an obligation-focussed perspective on forms of engagement contributing to the peace movement, and uses this theoretical basis to support further analysis of specific cases in the following chapters.

3.1. The relevance of obligation

In order to clarify what is meant by obligation and how it applies to this project, it is necessary to analyse the theoretical work of a number of key figures in the fields of political science and philosophy, both in abstract and more practical terms. It should however be noted that this project is by no means meant as a comprehensive investigation of all aspects of the concept of obligation, or of these theorists' work. Any of the listed works dedicated to exploring this theme would provide a more thorough examination. Instead, as

with the overview of the peace movement in the previous chapter, this chapter aims to examine several key concepts and lay out how these approaches may be relevant when dealing with the questions of writers' engagement.

Perhaps the most fitting starting point for examinations of obligation and its relevance to the protest movements of the late 1970s and 1980s can be found in the role of protest movements in the resurgence of theories of political obligation in the latter half of the twentieth century after a period of obscurity, as Simmons states:

It was not really until the 1950s that it [obligation] reappeared, the problems revived (as were so many other long neglected problems in their areas) by the most influential legal and political philosophers of their generation, H. L. A. Hart and John Rawls. The American civil rights movement and the Vietnam war both provided practical contexts in which doubts about political obligation and authority were frequently raised, further stimulating the revival of interest in the theoretical problems, which has continued to this day.⁸⁶

While Simmons's analysis focusses on American politics and society, the previous chapter has shown that the questions of legitimacy, authority and obligations were equally relevant in the context of the West German peace movement during the 1970s and 1980s, both in terms of interactions between citizens and the state, and more general principles of social and political engagement.

⁸⁶ Simmons, 'Political Obligation and Authority', p. 22.

These theories of obligations emphasise the role of obligations as political and moral concerns at the heart of democratic societies. There are a number of key differences between these theorists' approaches to the topic of obligation. For instance, while the aforementioned political philosophers H. L. A. Hart and John Rawls focus on abstract principles such as justice and fairness as grounds for obligations in any society,⁸⁷ theorists such as Carole Pateman place more importance on the social and political realities within which ideals of obligation and action must be implemented, as opposed to 'a general, abstract idea that has the same significance in any historical period or social context'.⁸⁸ Given the importance of context for both the West German peace movement and writers' contributions to it, my own argument on the roles of obligation falls more in line with Pateman's approach than that of Hart and Rawls, but this is not to say that the more generalised theories of obligation are entirely irrelevant when examining this topic.

Differing conclusions are also drawn on the respective roles and obligations of the citizen and the state, with Simmons favouring '*a posteriori* philosophical anarchism' in the face of the 'morally ambiguous institution' of the modern state,⁸⁹ while a contrasting perspective is put forward by George Klosko's analysis of obligations avoiding moral considerations by being 'rooted in receipt of essential public goods (and other significant benefits)

⁸⁷ John Rawls, *A Theory of Justice* (Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1999), p. 7.

⁸⁸ Carole Pateman, *The Problem of Political Obligation: A Critique of Liberal Theory* (Cambridge: Polity in association with Blackwell, 1985), p. 12.

⁸⁹ A. John Simmons, *Political Philosophy*, Fundamentals of Philosophy Series (New York: Oxford University Press, 2008), p. 65.

from the state’.⁹⁰ While it is not the intention of this analysis to evaluate the merits or legitimacy of these positions, or to endorse one conclusion on the role of the state over another, these perspectives must be considered in the context of this project’s goal of analysing the role of obligation in writers’ engagement with the West German peace movement.

In spite of their differences, these theories share some common ground, being rooted in the political environment of the late twentieth century, and sharing some common ancestry in the form of Enlightenment-era social contract theories such as Hobbes’s *Leviathan*, Locke’s *Two Treatises of Government*, and Rousseau’s *The Social Contract*, along with the earlier basis in works such as Plato’s *Crito*.

Following on from these seminal works on the role of obligations in socio-political contexts, most of the purely theoretical analyses of obligation examined here frame this factor as either a question of the relationship between the citizen and the state, or as a commitment of an individual to a cause or ideal.

The first is most evident in Plamenatz’s work on consent and political obligation, which places both of these factors among the indispensable foundations of democratic governance,⁹¹ but is also key to several other related

⁹⁰ George Klosko, *Political Obligations* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), p. 250.

⁹¹ John Petrov Plamenatz, *Consent, Freedom and Political Obligation*, 2nd edn (London: Oxford University Press, 1968).

analyses, including Rawls's theories of social justice⁹² and Simmons's work on justification and legitimacy in relation to governance.⁹³

The second of these factors is less widely covered in these codified theories of obligation, and focusses more on the use of obligation as a rhetorical device, often as part of an act of political commitment. This interpretation is particularly important in the German context, both in terms of the development of the peace movement examined in the previous chapter, and in the model of defiance encapsulated in the famous phrase attributed to Martin Luther 'Hier stehe ich, ich kann nicht anders'.⁹⁴ Though not necessarily present in all forms of obligation in relation to a higher cause, the spiritual overtones of this rhetorical use of obligation are particularly relevant for the peace movement given the importance of religious organisations as well as the personal convictions and obligations undertaken by many of the figures involved in the movement, even if the precise context and intentions of their engagement differed greatly from those of Luther.

However, the divide between obligation as a facet of the relationship between governing and governed and the more personal forms of obligation examined in relation to engagement with causes such as the peace movement is not quite as absolute as it may at first appear. As will be demonstrated in this chapter, the obligations surrounding the commitment to a protest movement at odds with many of the policies of the state in which it operated do not

⁹² Rawls, *A Theory of Justice*; John Rawls, *Justice as Fairness* (New York: Irvington, 1996).

⁹³ A. John Simmons, 'Justification and Legitimacy*', *Ethics*, 109.4 (1999), pp. 739–71.

⁹⁴ Roland Herbert Bainton, *Here I Stand: A Life of Martin Luther*, (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Publishers, 2009), p. 185.

necessarily run contrary to the observations concerning state-centred models, and in fact include many of the same mechanisms, although directed to different ends. Many relevant points can still be applied to this context, given that it is just as much a political matter as the affairs of state and citizen. It is therefore necessary to note that a large proportion of the body of research on the topic of obligation deals with this issue on a grander scale which is not always applicable to the more limited question of writers' engagement with the peace movement in this period, meaning that while some aspects may be equally relevant in the two contexts, not all can be so readily applied.

Following the long history of obligation theories in relation to citizens' interactions with states and political engagement, it would be easy to suggest that, as John Petrov Plamenatz wrote in 1968, 'political obligation, even in Oxford, is now an old-fashioned topic',⁹⁵ with its key questions laid to rest and its relevance to current analyses of social and political systems diminished. However, the ongoing research and discussion of theories of obligation shown in this chapter suggest that this may not be the case.

While the reappearance of obligation theories in the mid-twentieth century tended to focus on the issue of legitimacy as a model for citizens' behaviour, often including dissent and protest as parts of this system, research on the topic of obligation – particularly political obligation – towards the end of the twentieth century and into the twenty-first has taken on a somewhat tighter focus on the themes of obedience and individuals' attitudes towards governance, as is encapsulated in Simmons's 2002 definition:

⁹⁵ Plamenatz, *Consent, Freedom and Political Obligation*, p. 162.

Political obligations, then, as these are commonly understood, are general moral requirements to obey the laws and support the political institutions of our own States or governments.⁹⁶

This definition centred on obedience to the law is further supported by Klosko in his 2008 analysis of the topic:

A theory of political obligation should provide strong moral reasons to obey the law. It is not necessary that these be ‘obligations’ in the strict sense of the term—moral requirements that are self-imposed though voluntary actions. Any strong moral reasons to obey would explain citizens’ responsibilities and dispel the current scepticism among political philosophers.⁹⁷

However, as is suggested by Klosko’s aim to dispel scepticism over political obligations in particular, this is by no means universally accepted as the definitive model for political engagement. This is particularly relevant in the context of the roles of obligation in protest movements, in which the very same obligation-based justifications and rhetoric underpin forms of disobedience to the state, to greater or lesser degrees.

Leading on from questions of obedience and justification, Klosko puts forward a multiple principle model of obligation as a solution to what is presented as a problematic approach to theories of obligation in current research:

⁹⁶ Simmons, ‘Political Obligation and Authority’, p. 17.

⁹⁷ Klosko, p. 14.

In the literature, the different theories of obligation are often treated in somewhat reified form as independent “theories.” Each is assessed as if it alone is to provide satisfactory answers to the full range of questions. When a given ‘theory’ is found deficient in some respect, it can be labelled unsatisfactory and rejected.⁹⁸

Klosko cites a number of other scholars’ analyses of models of obligation, including M.B.E. Smith⁹⁹ and Christopher Wellman,¹⁰⁰ stating that both reach a general conclusion on the inability of obligation to satisfactorily address all relevant political and social issues at hand. This conclusion is also reached in other analyses, from Plamenatz’s judgement on the ‘old-fashioned’ view of consent and obligation as the driving motors of political affairs in liberal societies¹⁰¹ to Flathman’s emphasis on change and agency within the stricter rules to which obligations are shackled¹⁰² and Pateman’s critique of obligation as the defining factor in liberal societies without allowance for other factors.¹⁰³

This issue is compounded by the categorisation of numerous justifications for obligation. These include the consent and natural duty models examined by Klosko, with the former being based on the necessity of citizens consenting to the laws and principles associated with living in a particular state by entering into an informed agreement with it, and the latter based on the

⁹⁸ Klosko, p. 99.

⁹⁹ M.B.E. Smith, ‘Is There a Prima Facie Obligation to Obey the Law?’, *The Yale Law Journal*, 82.5 (1973), pp. 950–76; Klosko, p. 99.

¹⁰⁰ Christopher Wellman, ‘Toward a Liberal Theory of Political Obligation’, *Ethics*, 111.4 (2001), pp. 735–59; Klosko, p. 99.

¹⁰¹ Plamenatz, *Consent, Freedom and Political Obligation*, p. 182.

¹⁰² Richard E Flathman, *Political Obligation* (London: Croom Helm, 1973) p. xxiv.

¹⁰³ Pateman, *The Problem of Political Obligation*, p. 179.

works of Hart and Rawls and taking the natural, fair principles of social interaction ‘designed to advance the good of its members’ as the basis for mutual obligations between citizens.¹⁰⁴ These models of obligation are expanded on in overviews of the topic by Simmons, including associative accounts of obligation, which ‘try to justify the relevant requirements and rights by appeal to basic facts about persons’ identities or facts about the social and political roles they occupy’,¹⁰⁵ and transactional accounts which ‘portray our political obligations as required reciprocation for the receipt or acceptance of benefits provided by our states, governments, or fellow citizens’.¹⁰⁶

As Klosko argues, while criticisms of obligation theories present each of these models as insufficient when seen as independent of all other considerations, combinations of these theories, whether in terms of cumulation, mutual support, or simple overlap, provide a more accurate representation of citizens’ conduct in social and political systems which are themselves characterised by a multitude of interrelated factors.¹⁰⁷

Over the course of this chapter, I will argue that this interplay of multiple forms of obligation is particularly useful for the purposes of my analysis in this project as a whole. Firstly, the ongoing discussion of varied obligation theories, their applicability, and their cohesion highlights the continued relevance of this topic to the present day, even when these discussions often have a somewhat different focus to the debates in the mid-twentieth century, or to classical and Enlightenment theories of obligation and

¹⁰⁴ Rawls, *A Theory of Justice*, p. 4.

¹⁰⁵ Simmons, ‘Political Obligation and Authority’, p. 31.

¹⁰⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 33.

¹⁰⁷ Klosko, p. 101.

citizenship. Secondly, although the primary focus of many current obligation theories is on the interactions of the state and the citizen and obedience to the law, the varied forms of consent, natural duties, associative and transactional bases for obligations, as well as the more general forms of political, positional and moral obligations are equally relevant to other forms of social and political engagement. Klosko's 'multiple principles' model is therefore invaluable in providing a model for the simultaneous validity and interaction of varied forms of obligation across equally varied contexts, which is especially relevant in the context of the West German peace movement.

3.2. Definitions of obligation

It is however not enough to simply outline the key theorists whose concepts of obligation shape this project. Before the relative strengths and weaknesses of these theories, along with their application to the question of writers' engagement, can be adequately analysed, it is necessary to more accurately define what is meant by the term 'obligation'. From the competing (and sometimes complementing) theories put forward, three stand out as particularly pertinent to my analysis.

3.2.1. Political obligation

The first definition of obligation to be examined treats the issue as a primarily political affair. This form of obligation has been the largest subject of analysis and debate among the aforementioned theorists, and has been approached as a key aspect of the functioning of liberal democratic systems as well as in more general terms as a factor in political philosophy. As a result of this, there are a

number of ways in which it may be defined, both as a theoretical concept and in its application to practical matters.

Firstly, as Plamenatz describes in his influential 1968 work on the subject *Consent, Freedom and Political Obligation*, this phenomenon is primarily based around the relation of citizens to the government. In this conception, a government is obliged to act as ‘the interpreter of the social will’¹⁰⁸ and thereby represent its citizens by governing in their best interests and enforcing ‘laws which give effect to the wishes of as many of the governed as possible’.¹⁰⁹ In return for this, Plamenatz’s model citizen is defined as having a similarly binding obligation ‘even to those laws which do not give effect to his wishes’¹¹⁰ as a necessary means to achieve the goal of effective governance to the benefit of all involved. The validity of this conception of government has been hotly debated since its inception, however for the sake of clarity this project focusses on its applications in terms of obligations, drawing heavily on the social contract tradition of a mutually binding agreement between governing and governed.

Similarly mechanically-minded interpretations of obligation in relation to the workings of political systems are shared by Horton’s analysis, which views political obligation as something which occurs only within a distinct polity and refers to ‘the special moral relationship which obtains between members and *their* political community’.¹¹¹ This definition therefore emphasises the limited nature of these obligations dependent on a formal

¹⁰⁸ Plamenatz, *Consent, Freedom and Political Obligation*, p. 28.

¹⁰⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 152.

¹¹⁰ *Ibid.*

¹¹¹ Horton, p. 16 (Emphasis Horton’s).

membership, as the obligations concerned are acknowledged only as part of a larger system of institutional governance.

This model of obligation is however somewhat problematic, particularly in terms of the criteria for membership of such a political community. To this end, Plamenatz argues for a transactional account of obligation, underlining the importance of government by consent, defined by participation on the part of citizens in the functioning of the political community itself:

Whenever men co-operate to promote certain ends, rules of action must be enforced upon them as a necessary means to the achievement of these ends. These rules should, whatever the type of organization concerned, be enforced as far as possible with the consent of the majority of the persons who may be called upon to obey them.¹¹²

With this criterion of being called upon to obey, specific agreements between governing and governed with correspondingly specific forms of consent are implied. For general factors such as the rule of law, tacit consent to obey laws can be understood for any resident of a community, whereas in the case of more restricted activities such as voting, individuals excluded from participation for reasons such as age can be seen as exempt from both the need for consent and any associated obligations.

However, this consent-based form of obligation is not universally accepted. In a critique of consent theories and in the context of Hobbes's *Leviathan* in particular, Pateman argues that the concept of tacit consent to

¹¹² John Petrov Plamenatz, *Consent, Freedom and Political Obligation*, 2nd edn (London: Oxford University Press, 1968), p. 153.

governance on a large scale can be ‘transformed into the most empty form of hypothetical voluntarism’, firstly through the overly general conception of what forms of action should be consented to, and secondly in the case of apparent consent being enforced through coercion:

The individual’s submission can *always* be interpreted as ‘consent’; ‘obligation’ can always be inferred from forced submission.¹¹³

This issue is reinforced in Klosko’s critique of consent, which argues that the validity of such models must be limited to explicit agreements which ‘satisfy the conditions of valid promises; they must be made voluntarily, with promisors aware of the implications of their actions’.¹¹⁴ Klosko therefore surmises that ‘it is now generally recognized that a workable theory cannot be based on consent’¹¹⁵ for political obligations at a societal level. However, the principles of specific agreements to take on specific political obligations can still remain valid at an individual level, and is therefore particularly relevant for a variety of specific political obligations acknowledged and taken on by engaged individuals in the context of the West German peace movement as the following case studies will demonstrate, from individuals’ involvement with protest groups and demonstrations to the political obligations undertaken as part of writers’ organisations.

In contrast to the issues of consent-based polity membership, Horton proposes a simpler model:

¹¹³ Pateman, p. 44 (Emphasis Pateman’s).

¹¹⁴ Klosko, p. 123.

¹¹⁵ Ibid., p. 122.

My claim is that a polity is, like the family, a relationship into which we are mostly born; and that the obligations which are constructive of the relationship do not stand in need of moral justification in terms of a set of basic moral principles of some comprehensive moral theory.¹¹⁶

With this more essentialist theory, Horton constitutes membership of a polity and the political obligations associated with it as simple functions of citizenship, with all citizens – either by birth or otherwise – taking on all possible political obligations associated with a polity. This therefore avoids the problem of consent, but at the same time presents a simplistic model in which all possible political obligations are taken on regardless of individuals' volition. This again adds to the ongoing discussions of the extent of political obligations and polity membership and, as with the consent-based forms of obligation examined above, remains relevant in relation to the peace movement in the 1980s, particularly in terms of the implicit and often undesired positions, obligations and even dangers associated with membership of West German and other European polities for engaged writers and other citizens alike in the context of the Cold War and its associated threats of nuclear destruction. This includes the acute threat which would be felt by all residents of the Federal Republic in the event of either nuclear or conventional war breaking out between the Eastern and Western blocs, along with the factor of the West German government taking an active role in the developments of the Cold War through its military policy in this period, and the sense of complicity if citizens did not challenge their political representatives on these issues. These questions of membership and position within West German politics and society

¹¹⁶ Horton, p. 150.

factor into a number of the roles of writers examined in the following chapter, as well as a number of arguments supporting engagement with the peace movement and collective obligations, particularly in my case studies examining mass protest actions and discussions within writers' conferences in Chapters 5 and 6 respectively.

This conceptualisation is again expanded on by Simmons, who emphasises a moral element in the discussion, going beyond simple membership of a polity to include 'good' standards of conduct for citizens:

For political obligation has always been very intimately associated with the notion of citizenship, and has often been thought of as something like an obligation to be a "good citizen," in some fairly minimal sense. This includes, of course, more than just obeying the law; it includes supporting the political institutions of the state in other ways as well.¹¹⁷

In terms of moral considerations in political obligations, this model emphasises not only obedience to the letter of the law for its own sake, but also a general moral principle of good civil behaviour. Furthermore, this conception of political obligation reinforces Klosko's defining characteristic of theories of political obligation needing to 'provide strong moral reasons to obey the law'¹¹⁸ examined in Section 3.1., and highlights links and shared elements between different forms of obligation. While political, positional, and moral obligations remain distinct, the moral considerations which form an integral part of political obligation, and political obligations which define the positions

¹¹⁷ A. John Simmons, *Moral Principles and Political Obligations* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1979), p. 5.

¹¹⁸ Klosko, p. 14.

of citizenship and membership of political communities show that these forms of obligation are not as isolated as they may appear.

Moreover, while political obligation is closely tied to the membership of a particular political group or community and is also affected by the factor of citizenship and being a good citizen, its influence on the actions and behaviour of this group is far less limited. Where Horton identifies the questions of obligation between members and their polity and Simmons describes a set of obligations which transcend legal requirements, both accounts agree that citizenship or other group membership is the basis for this form of obligation, which is owed to the system itself in the form of authorities, leaders or institutions.

This leads on to another aspect of political obligation mentioned in Plamenatz's earlier analysis, in that it is viewed as a relationship between members of a political community and a form of authority. This is shown in Simmons's stressing of the importance of a legitimate authority figure and the factors which distinguish such legitimate authority from illegitimate ones, often in the form of a state or its laws,¹¹⁹ and is further supported in Flathman's analysis of the concept:

A central theme of the work is that the practice of political obligation operates only if men *chose* or *decide* to do or refrain from doing certain *actions* because they believe that there are *good reasons* for accepting

¹¹⁹ Simmons, *Moral Principles and Political Obligations*, p. 4.

and obeying or rejecting and disobeying *rules* that require or forbid these actions.¹²⁰

In addition to reinforcing the importance of established rules and obedience in relation to political obligation, this definition raises a number of further issues in relation to the obligations underpinning engagement with the peace movement in particular. The first of these lies in the issue of obligation in peaceful protest. As the previous chapter outlined, the activities of the peace movement in the early 1980s challenged the West German government's policies, particularly its military policy, through its mass demonstrations and other protest actions. As was examined in Section 2.2.1., although some elements within the diverse peace movement sought to challenge the legitimacy of the federal government and outright oppose its authority, the vast majority of contributors to the peace movement stopped short of rejecting governmental authority in a general sense, or abandoning the framework of the democratic society in which both government and protest movement were based. The obligations involved in supporting and justifying these forms of peaceful protest and critique of the government's policies go beyond the binary distinction of obedience or disobedience, and continue to support and engage with the political institutions of the state and the system in which it functions, while not necessarily playing the obedient role of the 'good citizen' as the term is used by Simmons.

An additional potentially problematic aspect of interpretations of obligation lies in the distinction between the concepts of duties and

¹²⁰ Flathman, p. xv (Emphasis Flathman's).

obligations. This is highlighted by Simmons in terms of linguistic distinction between actively undertaken obligations and more passive duties:

Unlike duties, then, obligations require special performances; this fact is reflected in language – we “obligate ourselves” but we do not “duty ourselves.”¹²¹

This concept is however debated by figures such as Dudley Knowles, who argues that while such a distinction is a common element in philosophical discussions of the subject, it may not be as helpful as it appears:

It is really just a label for a cluster of familiar problems that we broached above. Obviously we need to say more about the concept of obligation but we should be aware that the analysis of terms is not an exact science and any conclusions should be viewed with caution.¹²²

Knowles goes on to clarify that:

True or false, I want to insist that it really doesn't matter which term we use. What is important is that we don't use our intuitions or guesses concerning the linguistic nuances of these different terms to fashion philosophical arguments that beg substantive questions.¹²³

This is further complicated in the German context, as the word 'Pflicht' encompasses both the pre-existing conditions of 'duties' and the specially performative 'obligations' brought up in Simmons's analysis. Therefore, this analysis does not draw a strict divide between duties and obligations in terms

¹²¹ Simmons, *Moral Principles and Political Obligations*, p. 14.

¹²² Dudley Knowles, *Political Obligation: A Critical Introduction*, Routledge Contemporary Political Philosophy (London; New York: Routledge, 2010), p. 6.

¹²³ Knowles, p. 7.

of either German or English linguistic nuance, as – following Knowles’s argument – the avoidance of such a debate over distinctions allows for improved focus on the content of these concepts. This also means that no distinction will be drawn between actively interpreted obligations and inherent duties associated with particular roles and forms of engagement with the peace movement. The duties or obligations involved in defining and justifying the roles of engaged writers are particularly open to interpretation, as many of the roles themselves are also reliant on individuals’ judgement to some degree, as will be examined in greater detail in Chapter 4.

Finally, what can these definitions of political obligation tell us in relation to Horton’s three questions mentioned above? In relation to the question of to whom or to what political obligations are owed, it is evident that this form of obligation refers to a relationship between members of a political group and an authority. However, while the membership of the group may be clearly visible, the nature of this authority is less fixed, and can refer to a leader, a state, a group (with or without official recognition) or a particular ideal. Additionally, as is particularly relevant to the questions of political obligations in the context of the West German peace movement, this issue can be complicated by the interaction of multiple lines of political obligation. When faced with simultaneous obligations to state institutions, party memberships, and other political organisations such as protest groups, conflicts between multiple obligations become particularly pressing problems, as the close analyses in the following chapters will show.

The extent and limits of these obligations are similarly defined: these obligations apply to members of a polity and their actions within it. While

these obligations may be grounded in moral or other concerns, their application does however remain within the parameters set by the political community, meaning that a strictly defined political obligation may only be said to apply to matters affecting this system. Finally, the justification of these obligations is also tied to the question of membership of the political community, as the moral and legal requirements of citizenship form the framework in which these obligations take shape.

3.2.2. Positional obligation

Leading on from these forms of obligation linked to political communities and institutions, the factor of positional obligation has a somewhat more personal character which adds to its relevance to the topic of writers' engagement. In the most general terms, positional obligations can be understood as a set of obligations emanating, as Simmons states, from the outlined duties and expectations associated with 'some particular office, station or role'.¹²⁴ This role may be official or unofficial, permanent or situational, unique or overlapping with multiple other roles and sets of duties. Furthermore, this form of obligation may be explicitly defined, for instance a code of conduct or set of rules and regulations agreed upon before the position is taken on, or implicitly established through expectations and perceptions of the role itself and the individuals occupying it.

This issue of codified positional obligations is of particular importance to the roles taken on by the engaged writers at the centre of this analysis, which in most (but not all) cases are characterised by a lack of specific requirements or protocols. Unlike the terms of employment and code of conduct established

¹²⁴ Simmons, *Moral Principles and Political Obligations*, p. 17.

as the basis of an employee's position within a business or the orders, regulations and chain of command to which a soldier must adhere, the role of an engaged writer is not defined in such explicit terms, meaning that while the role itself and its associated obligations are very much in evidence, their nature is naturally somewhat more flexible than the rigid forms of positional obligations codified in law or by specific regulations.

This is not however to say that the positional obligations taken on and discussed by engaged writers are completely unstructured. As will be examined in greater detail in the following chapter, the positional obligations of writers are tied to a wide range of roles and expectations. While none of these roles are strictly codified in the same sense as institutional or professional positions, the expectations associated with them define a range of obligations which are no less pressing or demanding.

As a result of the wide range of possibilities, not all roles and expectations apply to all forms of activity or engagement. In fact, the positional obligations of these figures are open to a range of interpretations, often with multiple roles and obligations simultaneously taken on in contribution to a public position. As a result of this multitude of possible interpretations, there is strong individual variation in terms of the priorities, extent and even the basic validity of the roles themselves, leading to extensive debate of the subject. This will be analysed in greater detail in Chapter 4, and plays an important role in many of the specific instances of writers' engagement examined in the later case studies.

The importance of these roles and expectations is further reinforced by Flathman's analysis of what he terms 'role-activities', which 'refer not to individual persons and their characteristics but to established expectations concerning relationships among persons'.¹²⁵ With this analysis, positional expectations and obligations are viewed as being negotiated between the role itself and its reception in wider social terms, stating that:

There is much in the conduct of Judge Smith, and in the responses of others to his conduct, that we cannot understand or assess if we do not know what it is to be a judge, what it is that a judge is expected to do. The concept "judge" and the activities of judges are intrinsically social.¹²⁶

In a similar way to Flathman's judge, the positional obligations of engaged writers may be understood as socially defined, particularly given that such a large part of their public position is linked to what Schalk refers to as the 'symbiotic relationship' between intellectual existence and engagement through published works, even in the case of writers' works not necessarily being characterised as direct acts of political engagement.¹²⁷ This effect may even be more direct in terms of writers' role-activities than those of the judge, given the expectation of objective, impersonal analysis on the part of the latter and the inherently subjective, personal expectations linked to the former, which allow for additional flexibility in terms of socially negotiated positional expectations and duties which form the basis of these obligations.

¹²⁵ Flathman, p. 124.

¹²⁶ Ibid.

¹²⁷ David L Schalk, *The Spectrum of Political Engagement: Mounier, Benda, Nizan, Brasillach, Sartre* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1979), p. 116.

The question of to whom obligations are owed is somewhat more direct, but is still by no means trivial. With regards to positional obligation, this factor is mostly dependent on the specificities of the position, with a greater emphasis therefore placed on the obligor than on the obligee. The obligation may be owed in part to the system or institution which enforces the position in question, or in the case of writers in the public sphere, to the audience receiving their published works and the political community which is influenced by them. As with the varied interpretations of writers' roles and expectations, this element is open to a range of interpretations, from a *Geist-Macht* dynamic in which writers' positional obligations are owed to the political system while maintaining critical distance to it,¹²⁸ to interpretations of obligations being owed to higher societal or moral principles, often with ideological or religious implications.¹²⁹ As with the element of choice in political obligations examined in the previous section, these perspectives on the allegiance of positional obligations are examined in greater detail in the following chapter. This includes interpretations of how the positional obligations of writers should be fulfilled, but also the broader issues of the extent to which particular obligations apply to these public roles, or whether certain obligations should apply to writers at all. As the varied roles examined in Chapter 4 will show, the positional obligations associated with a role detached from social and political affairs differ from those underpinning a role of representative authority, which in turn differ from the obligations involved in taking on a critical, irritant role in relation to the status quo.

¹²⁸ Dietz Bering, *Die Intellektuellen: Geschichte Eines Schimpfwortes* (Stuttgart: Klett-Cotta, 1978), p. 68.

¹²⁹ David L Schalk, p. 111.

One final point which should be considered in relation to the factor of positional engagement is the question of morality in relation to the expectations and fulfilment of positional obligations. This is outlined in Simmons's approach to the subject:

The existence of a positional duty (i.e., someone's filling a position tied to certain duties) is a morally *neutral* fact. If a positional duty is binding on us, it is because there are grounds for a moral requirement to perform that positional duty which are independent of the position and the scheme which defines it. The existence of a positional duty, then, never establishes (by itself) a moral requirement.¹³⁰

In the case of writers, the distinction between a morally neutral fulfilment of a prescribed role and an act of engagement involving a moral aspect may be demonstrated by a socially defined expectation on the part of a politically engaged writer to speak out against injustice and to refuse the position of abstention, in Schalk's formulation.¹³¹ While writers may hold particular opinions on any given subject, there is little external binding force which would compel them to enter into public discussion against their will or their better judgement in this matter. The act of public engagement as a 'conscious and wilful choice to enter the arena'¹³² in fulfilment of this positional obligation must be seen as an act with an inherently moral aspect.

This perspective on the moral dimension of positional obligations can be contrasted with that of Dudley Knowles, who posits that some institutional

¹³⁰ Simmons, *Moral Principles and Political Obligations*, p. 21.

¹³¹ David L Schalk, p. 25.

¹³² David L Schalk, p. 25.

duties (a term Knowles uses interchangeably with positional obligations) do in fact contain an integral moral requirement, such as the obligations of a parent towards a child.¹³³ While Knowles does not explicitly extend this inherent morality to the positional obligations of writers in his analysis, arguments for its importance in writers' roles remain relevant, particularly in relation to engagement with the peace movement. Accordingly, whether in terms of Simmons's morally neutral positional obligations with morally influenced fulfilment, or Knowles's inherently moral positions, the moral implications of obligation must also be considered in relation to this project.

3.2.3. Moral obligation

The final definition of obligation to address in relation to this project diverges even further from the specific nature of political positional themes explored previously, and encompasses the moral aspect of obligation. This is by far the broadest of the definitions put forward in this analysis.

While theories of political obligation have tended to refer to particular obligations in distinct political communities and positional obligations are based on specific roles and expectations, obligations to action grounded in moral justifications can and have been applied across an even wider range of contexts, from humanitarian concerns to religious codes of morality, and from individual conscientious decisions to national and supranational disaster relief efforts and even military interventions.

In order to apply this far-reaching and often vaguely defined concept of moral obligation in any kind of practical fashion in this project, it is necessary

¹³³ Knowles, p. 10.

to provide additional clarity on how it should be approached. In the context of this project, and following the multiple principle of obligation put forward by Klosko, moral obligations are for the most part defined as supporting factors, overlapping with and in many cases reinforcing the political and positional obligations in public discourse and the conduct of individuals and organisations.

This means that while actions may be required or expected within political communities and within the parameters set by specific roles, ‘moral requirements’ are often necessary, as Simmons states, for these actions to be taken.¹³⁴ Indeed, Simmons goes on to argue that an important criterion of such general moral obligations is that they apply in the absence of particular positions or state institutions:

Moral requirements are general when they bind persons irrespective of their special roles, relationships, or performances. Thus, duties not to murder, assault, or steal count as general requirements, as do duties to promote impartial values like justice or happiness. Such duties are commonly said to be owed to humanity or to persons generally – or not owed to anyone at all.¹³⁵

Because of this, two important factors in Simmons’s evaluation of moral factors in obligation are apparent. Firstly, moral obligations not to murder, assault or steal are independent from any particular state-enforced laws against these actions. However, despite their independence, the two sets of obligations provide mutual support for one another, thus ensuring that

¹³⁴ Simmons, *Moral Principles and Political Obligations*, p. 3.

¹³⁵ Simmons, ‘Political Obligation and Authority’, p. 28.

similar standards of behaviour are reinforced, whether through political obligations for citizens to obey the law, or moral obligations for humans not to commit murder. Secondly, while the mutual support of different forms of obligation can provide stronger, more comprehensive models of obligation in accordance with Klosko's multiple principle, Simmons also argues that these moral requirements remain valid in the absence of other obligations.

This conception of persistent, independent moral obligations is strongly linked to much earlier works in the social contract tradition, in particular, Jean-Jacques Rousseau's assessment of the state of nature in his treatise *The Social Contract*.¹³⁶ Rousseau's conception of a natural community devoid of obligations imposed by social and political order puts forward an optimistic model of human behaviour, arguing that the basic moral obligations of individuals would ensure a more or less cohesive existence in a state of nature in the absence of any externally imposed obligations, and furthermore that a social or political order must reflect the rights and obligations of its constituent citizens in order to be legitimate.

This conception of obligation draws on Rousseau's earlier *Discourse on the Origin and Basis of Inequality Among Men*,¹³⁷ which asserts that significant conflicts and inequalities would not only have been averted by the inherent moral obligations of people living in these conditions, but that many of these problems would not have existed at all without the external imposition of other obligations through oppressive regimes and social developments. With

¹³⁶ Jean-Jacques Rousseau, *Du contrat social ou principes du droit politique*, ed. by M. Soares Sálvio (MetaLibri, 2008).

¹³⁷ Jean-Jacques Rousseau and Blaise. Bachofen, *Discours sur l'origine et les fondements de l'inégalité parmi les hommes* (Paris: Flammarion, 2008).

these analyses, Rousseau therefore emphasises the importance of morally driven obligations, which he argues serve as the basis for a safe, secure existence as well as feeding into the establishment of legitimate social and political order. This has two important implications for the forms of obligation examined in this analysis, namely in the conception of certain obligations as intrinsically morally oriented, and, unlike many of the political and positional obligations examined in the previous two sections, not necessarily contingent on the relation between individual and state, given Rousseau's argument for basic obligations within a state of nature. As I will argue in later chapters focussing on specific instances of engagement, both of these factors remain relevant in relation to obligations in protest movements.

This conception is however by no means universally accepted. A particularly prominent assessment of human moral behaviour and relation to politics and society in direct opposition to Rousseau's can be found in Thomas Hobbes's argument on the natural condition of mankind in *Leviathan*, in which existence without the rule of law and its associated political or positional obligations is also lacking in moral obligations, therefore leaving life 'solitary, poor, nasty, brutish, and short'.¹³⁸ Accordingly, Hobbes argues for strong governance and rule of law as necessary in order to avoid this undesirable scenario, and thereby places considerably more importance on strictly defined political and positional obligations within the framework of a social contract than on more loosely defined moral obligations. Both Rousseau and Hobbes

¹³⁸ Thomas Hobbes, *Leviathan or the Matter, Forme, & Power of a Common-Wealth Ecclesiasticall and Civill*. (Hamilton, Ontario, CAN: McMaster University Archive of the History of Economic Thought, 1999), p. 57
<<http://site.ebrary.com/lib/uon/docDetail.action?docID=2001972>> [accessed 1 June 2014].

agree on the importance of obligations in providing structure and security, with a key distinction lying in the effects and relative importance of inherent moral obligations between individuals and codified political and positional obligations in a state framework.

Building on this basis of natural state and social contract model, a further distinction must be drawn when considering the application of moral obligations to the context of this analysis, concerning special and general moral requirements. These are defined by Simmons thus:

Special requirements being those that arise out of special relationships we have with specific persons or groups and general requirements being those that bind persons regardless of their special relationships, acts or roles.¹³⁹

This distinction is important, as the forms of moral obligation outlined in the social contract tradition are understood as general requirements, applied at a societal level and binding all concerned regardless of individual concerns. In fact, in Hobbes's depiction of the forms of obligation required in the formation of Leviathan, a key point is that these requirements transcend the individualistic or specific desires which would lead to conflict by providing generalised structures which apply to all. However, as has been shown in the previous section, the specific obligations linked to particular roles, positions, and situations are just as relevant in this context as the more generalised forms, and in many cases are just as focussed on morality. Leading on from this, the forms of moral obligation expressed and engaged with over the course of this

¹³⁹ Simmons, *Political Philosophy*, p. 43.

project's analysis need not be restricted to either entirely specific or entirely generalised requirements, as the factor of morality in expressed obligations can be – and as the following case studies will show, was frequently – applied in equal measure and with equal validity to the specific contexts of personal engagement and to the wider sense of universal moral concerns.

However, as with Pateman's critique of the theoretical basis of political obligation, these themes of moral factors in obligation prove to be potentially problematic in the application of their ideals to practical situations. For instance, in order to demonstrate the influence of moral obligation on positional duties, Simmons uses the example of a medic faced with a wounded person in need of assistance. While providing this aid is a central part of the medic's positional responsibility, they are also obliged to help a fellow person in need regardless of their own designated role.¹⁴⁰

Using this hypothetical situation as an explanation of moral obligation does however have some drawbacks. The moral obligation faced by a single hypothetical medic in relation to a single casualty runs the risk of oversimplifying the much more complex field of political and positional responsibilities. While in this case a clear course of action is available to the medic, extrapolating a moral imperative from this to real-world scenarios reinforces Pateman's criticism of treating obligation as a 'general, abstract idea that has the same significance in any historical period or social context',¹⁴¹ or in this case, the same significance for two individuals in a medical emergency

¹⁴⁰ Simmons, *Moral Principles and Political Obligations*, p. 19.

¹⁴¹ Pateman, p. 12.

and for a larger number of individuals within a more complex social and political context.

This issue is examined further and with additional emphasis on religious morality in Max Weber's distinction between ethics of conviction ('*Gesinnungsethik*') and ethics of responsibility ('*Verantwortungsethik*'). In *Politik als Beruf*, Weber differentiates these concepts based on the relative importance of the moral principles and the practical consequences of action:

Es ist ein abgrundtiefer Gegensatz, ob man unter der gesinnungsethischen Maxime handelt - religiös geredet: "Der Christ tut recht und stellt den Erfolg anheim" – *oder* unter der verantwortungsethischen: daß man für die (voraussehbaren) *Folgen* seines Handelns aufzukommen hat.¹⁴²

Unlike Pateman's critique of the problems faced by models of obligation in the face of practical applications however, Weber's definition of a more pragmatic ethics of responsibility retains a moral component, as Johan Verstraeten argues:

Weber's response in *Politik als Beruf* is far from an abstract, scientific exposition on the ideal-typical contradistinction between "Gesinnungsethik" and "Verantwortungsethik". It is true that he repeatedly emphasises the fact that the politician with a genuine vocation must always take the probable and real consequences of the use or non-use of certain means of power into consideration. An ethics of responsibility conceived in this way, however, does not stand on its

¹⁴² Max Weber, *Politik als Beruf* (Cologne: Anaconda, 2014), p. 80.

own, rather it forms a triad together with clarity of insight and political passion.¹⁴³

This conception of moral obligations therefore further reinforces the importance of overlapping and mutually supporting forms of moral, political, and positional obligations, in addition to the more practical factors involved and consequences of action. While the addition of moral considerations in concepts of political and positional obligations is necessary for a more complete view of their functioning, it is equally necessary to recognise the limits of such concepts in order to avoid overly vague and overly simplified conclusions.

This therefore addresses one of the three overarching questions on obligation put forward at the beginning of this chapter, namely the extent and limits of this form of obligation. As for the questions of to what or to whom moral obligations are owed, and the justifications behind them, it appears that no simple, definitive answers can be given for such a wide and often individually determined principle. Whether moral obligations are seen as being owed to general moral ideals, religious principles, or on an individual basis can vary between conceptions, and the justifications for such principles follow a similarly varied range. In spite of this broad range, moral obligations are nonetheless important in contributing to the cumulating, overlapping and at times conflicting forms of obligation involved in the issues at the centre of this project.

¹⁴³ Johan Verstraeten, 'The Tension Between "Gesinnungsethik" and "Verantwortungsethik": A Critical Interpretation of the Position of Max Weber in "Politik als Beruf"', *Ethical Perspectives*, 2.3 (1995), 180–87 (p. 182).

3.3. Symbolic power

While the above definitions are useful for pinning down what is meant by the term ‘obligation’ in relation to public and political activity, the question of its influence in this context is, however, somewhat more complex. Expanding on the criticisms of obligation as an all-encompassing term independent of other circumstances and individual attitudes, other theories provide additional insights into political discourse, and the factor of writers’ obligations in particular. This section provides a contrast to the previous definitions of obligation as a defining factor in engagement, focussing on the French sociologist Pierre Bourdieu’s theoretical work on symbolic power and political capital as the basis for socio-political status. This section aims to give insight into the status of engaged writers, as well as provide an alternative perspective on the definitions and justifications of writers’ engagement, along with the questions of how and why models of obligation can be applied in the specific context of the peace movement. Thus, while examining a critique of the theories of obligation outlined previously in this chapter, this section does not ultimately aim to replace the concept of obligation, or to invalidate its application to engagement with the peace movement.

3.3.1. Symbolic power as a counterpoint to obligation

While the theories of obligation in the previous sections frequently place emphasis on an explicit commitment to specific principles and obligations as justifications for individual actions, Bourdieu puts forward the theory that such activities are instead a function of symbolic power, which is defined thus:

Symbolic power – as a power of constituting the given through utterances, of making people see and believe, of confirming or transforming the vision of the world and, thereby, action on the world and thus the world itself, an almost magical power which enables one to obtain the equivalent of what is obtained through force (whether physical or economic), by virtue of the specific effect of mobilization – is a power that can be exercised only if it is *recognized*, that is, misrecognized as arbitrary.¹⁴⁴

This explanation of symbolic power raises two main points. Firstly, it categorises political engagement on the part of writers – along with other politically active individuals – as having less to do with political, positional, or moral obligations, and as more equivalent to an exercise of political and social power. Bourdieu therefore includes the expression of obligations as one of many rhetorical tools used by engaged writers to support their exercise of symbolic power, rather than as motivating or justifying factors in their own right. In doing so, Bourdieu draws a comparison between this form of force and coercion through other means, used by individuals with the particular resources and particular positions to direct things to their advantage. Accordingly, a general or minister of defence may draw on the capital of the military forces under their command, a business owner or minister of finance

¹⁴⁴ Pierre Bourdieu and others, *Language and Symbolic Power* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2008), p. 170; Pierre Bourdieu, *Langage et Pouvoir Symbolique* (Paris: Editions Fayard, 2001), p. 210. ‘Le pouvoir symbolique comme pouvoir de constituer le donné par l’énonciation, de faire voir et de faire croire, de confirmer ou de transformer la vision du monde, et, par là, l’action sur le monde, donc le monde, pouvoir quasi magique qui permet d’obtenir l’équivalent de ce qui est obtenu par la force (physique ou économique) grâce à l’effet spécifique de mobilisation, ne s’exerce que s’il est *reconnu*, c’est à dire méconnu comme arbitraire.’ (Emphasis Bourdieu’s).

may draw on the economic capital at their disposal, and a writer or professional politician may draw on the symbolic capital of their expertise in the use of language, a factor which is defined as any property which is 'perceived by social agents endowed with categories of perception which cause them to know it and to recognise it, to give it value'.¹⁴⁵

Secondly, the misrecognition of the flow of symbolic power as an arbitrary characteristic of prevailing discourse emphasises the nature of this factor as integral to the larger political and social systems in which it operates. While parallels are drawn between the ability to exercise one's will through force and through the more subtle influence of symbolic power, a key difference can be seen in the fact that while the more obvious shows of force must often rely on the very visible manifestation of the capital supporting their power, the symbolic form relies on the individual's perceived authority and status masking a lack of concrete support with which compliance could be forced. Moreover, the misrecognition of this mechanism as arbitrary also shows an acceptance on the part of both its subjects and objects that such an arrangement is self-evident. This point is further emphasised by Bourdieu:

For symbolic power is that invisible power which can be exercised only with the complicity of those who do not want to know that they are subject to it or even that they themselves exercise it.¹⁴⁶

¹⁴⁵ Pierre Bourdieu, *Practical Reason: On the Theory of Action* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1998), p. 47.

¹⁴⁶ Bourdieu and others, *Language and Symbolic Power*, p. 164; Bourdieu, *Langage et Pouvoir Symbolique*, p. 202. 'Le pouvoir symbolique est en effet ce pouvoir invisible qui ne peut s'exercer qu'avec la complicité de ceux qui ne veulent pas savoir qu'ils le subissent ou même qu'ils l'exercent.'

Despite the lack of any external ability to force others to be subject to the influence of this form of symbolic power, no clear distinctions are drawn between its invisible influence and the enforced demands of physical or economic coercion. Bourdieu argues that this is a result of these factors forming a part of the power relations which underpin all political and social activity and encompass the accumulation and uses of capital,¹⁴⁷ stating that the representation of other forms of capital in symbolic terms:

Secures a real transubstantiation of the relations of power by rendering recognizable and misrecognizable the violence they objectively contain and thus by transforming them into symbolic power, capable of producing real effects without any apparent expenditure of energy.¹⁴⁸

This aspect of symbolic power is particularly relevant to the question of its application in relation to writers' political engagement. Firstly, there is the application of power relationships to the role of writers in relation to the ownership or stewardship of the truth, highlighted by Foucault's analysis of the traditional area of expertise claimed by (left-leaning) intellectuals:

For a long period, the "left" intellectual spoke and was acknowledged the right of speaking in the capacity of master of truth and justice. He was heard, or purported to make himself heard, as the spokesman of the

¹⁴⁷ Pierre Bourdieu, *Raisons pratiques: sur la théorie de l'action* (Paris: Éditions du Seuil, 1996), p. 8.

¹⁴⁸ Bourdieu and others, *Language and Symbolic Power*, p. 170; Bourdieu, *Langage et Pouvoir Symbolique*, pp. 210–11. 'Assure une véritable transubstantiation des rapports de force en faisant méconnaître-reconnaître la violence qu'ils enferment objectivement et en les transformant ainsi en pouvoir symbolique, capable de produire des effets réels sans dépense apparente d'énergie.'

universal. To be an intellectual meant something like being the consciousness/conscience of us all.¹⁴⁹

This claim of validation through asserting this role of guardians of truth and universal conscience in society therefore becomes a claim to wider authority within the society, as well as a demonstration of personal legitimacy.

With this concept applied to intellectual engagement, Bourdieu argues that the actual content of political statements appears to be a secondary concern, with emphasis placed more on the position itself, providing validation to the literary and linguistic acts of engagement which in turn aim to further support the perceived validity and authority of those who occupy the position itself, a proposition on which Foucault's elaborates:

“Truth” is linked by a circular relation to systems of power which produce it and sustain it, and to effects of power which it induces and which redirect it. A “regime” of truth.¹⁵⁰

With this self-legitimising proposition and its influence on discourse, the act of engagement itself, particularly when delivered in the form of rhetoric or literary work, can be seen as inseparable from maintaining the position of authority enjoyed by writers and other prominent intellectuals. The ability to speak out and mobilise support on the basis of a trusted public status also

¹⁴⁹ Michel Foucault, ‘Truth and Power’, in *Critical Theory: A Reader*, ed. by Douglas Tallack (London; New York: Routledge, 2014), p. 73; Michel Foucault, ‘La Fonction Politique de L’intellectuel’, *Politique-Hebdo*, 1976, 31–3 (p. 31).

¹⁵⁰ Michel Foucault, ‘The Political Function of the Intellectual’, *Radical Philosophy*, 17 (1977), 12–5 (p. 14); Foucault, ‘La Fonction Politique de L’intellectuel’, p. 33. ‘La “vérité” est liée circulairement à des systèmes de pouvoir qui la produisent et la soutiennent, et à des effets de pouvoir qu’elle induit et qui la reconduisent. “Régime” de la vérité.’

constitutes a demonstration of the individual's suitability and legitimacy to take on this public role, along with influencing the actions of others, thereby exercising the symbolic power associated with writers' positions, even when not strictly intended.

This demonstration of legitimate authority and ability to mobilise others leads on to the final way in which Bourdieu's theme of symbolic power can arguably be applied to writers' political engagement, which concerns the more general application of these power relations to the political field:

The political field is thus the site of a competition for power which is carried out by means of a competition for the control of non-professionals or, more precisely, for the monopoly of the right to speak and act in the name of some or all of the non-professionals.¹⁵¹

Taking this concept further, the exercise of symbolic power through rhetorical and literary engagement in order to either gain or to demonstrate the right to speak or act on behalf of others can be seen as part of the larger theme of the 'monopoly of the professionals',¹⁵² by which membership of an accepted group is recognised as having the relevant authority to direct matters in their area of expertise. Furthermore, this accepted position allows 'professionals' in the use of language to exercise the symbolic power associated with their positions to influence the actions of their audiences and the wider public, either by setting

¹⁵¹ Bourdieu and others, *Language and Symbolic Power*, p. 190; Bourdieu, *Langage et Pouvoir Symbolique*, p. 238. 'Le champ politique est donc le lieu d'une concurrence pour le pouvoir qui s'accomplit par l'intermédiaire d'une concurrence pour les profanes ou, mieux, pour le monopole du droit de parler et d'agir au nom d'une partie plus ou moins étendue des profanes.'

¹⁵² Bourdieu and others, *Language and Symbolic Power*, p. 172.

the parameters of legitimate discourse, or through direct influence on opinions and actions.

3.3.2. Symbolic power and obligation

While these theories of symbolic power offer an intriguing insight into the functioning of socio-political discourse in a variety of contexts, there are a number of problems with their application to the issues of writers' engagement with the West German peace movement in the late 1970s and 1980s.

The first problem with viewing the concepts of symbolic power and the dynamics of power relations as the primary motivation for writers' engagement with the West German peace movement in the late 1970s and 1980s lies in the structure of the protest movement itself. As has been detailed in the previous chapter's overview of its development, the structure of the peace movement was far removed from the vision of an enlightened few preaching to their supporters. Instead, as was outlined in Section 2.2.2., the movement was characterised by mass mobilisation across a wide spectrum of participants, with what Kriesi et al. identify as an 'identity-based logic of action', resulting in a shift away from individual contributions in favour of collective identification with the aims and actions of the movement, at least to the extent of the minimal consensus which bound the varied contributors together.¹⁵³

Kriesi goes on to note:

That the appeal of the new social movements has gone far beyond the narrow circle of the social and cultural professionals is evident from the

¹⁵³ Hanspeter Kriesi and others, *New Social Movements in Western Europe: A Comparative Analysis* (London: UCL press, 1995), p. 87.

level of mobilization they have attained throughout the last two decades.¹⁵⁴

Thus, the currents of mobilisation and structural composition of the peace movement appear to be in opposition to Bourdieu's conception of the 'concentration of political capital in the hands of a small number of people' with the aim of maintaining a 'monopoly of the professionals' through the denial of cultural instruments and political activity to the general public.¹⁵⁵ Instead, as the following case studies will demonstrate in greater detail, writers' engagement with the peace movement was not only very much in evidence in this period, but also draws frequently on collective rhetoric, with participating writers and other prominent individuals frequently expressing solidarity as protesters and as citizens along with the rest of the peace movement.

This is not, however, to say that engaged writers contributed to the peace movement and its protest activities in exactly the same way as other citizens. As Chapter 5 in particular will show, neither the protest organisers nor the engaged writers themselves were oblivious to the strategic value of these forms of engagement, and the specific contributions of writers were put to good use in supporting and adding their expertise to the efforts of the wider peace movement. Therefore, this form of engagement frames writers' areas of expertise not as a reason for these figures to take a leading role in the movement's development, but is instead based on positional obligations to use their expertise to contribute to the proceedings where possible. Establishing

¹⁵⁴ Kriesi and others., p. xx.

¹⁵⁵ Bourdieu and others, *Language and Symbolic Power*, p. 172.

and maintaining a monopoly of the professionals in terms of peace protest does not seem to have been a priority, as the expertise, legitimacy, and prominent status of these figures were used to make contributions to a diverse collective movement.

It should however be noted that this does not mean that symbolic power is an irrelevant theory of social or political activities, or that this analysis should be seen as an attempt to refute Bourdieu's conclusions, or indeed that the themes of symbolic capital and power relations were entirely absent from the forms of political engagement in this context. This section has instead aimed to demonstrate that while these theories remain valid and with many applications, their applicability as defining and motivating factors of writers' engagement in this period is less clear than that of the theories of obligation outlined above. Therefore, while symbolic power provides important insight into social interactions and a critical perspective on theories of obligation, the focus of my overarching analysis remains on the influence of obligation in writers' engagement with the peace movement.

3.4. Why obligation?

Following this examination of *what* obligations are across a variety of definitions and interpretations, along with an analysis of their limitations and alternative theories, it is now necessary to consider the question of *why*. Why should obligations be considered important? Why are they relevant to the issue of writers' engagement with the peace movement in the late Cold War period? Why should obligation in particular be considered over other factors in this form of engagement? The following section aims to address these questions.

3.4.1. Obligation in political engagement

The first reason for this project's focus on obligation as a political factor leads back to the importance of this concept with regards to political engagement in general terms as outlined in Section 3.1. In addition to the general relevance of obligation as an important influence in political thought as well as in more practical terms, it can be argued – and indeed *has* been argued by a number of the prominent theorists already discussed above – that political obligation can never be entirely disregarded in relation to political engagement or examination of political philosophy.¹⁵⁶

A reason for this influence can be found in the wide variety of ways in which obligations can make their influence felt. As the above definitions and discussions of the concept of obligation have shown, obligation is an adaptable term which can encompass not only the relation of citizens and the state, but also public displays and private convictions, large-scale political systems as well as personal actions, and can revolve with equal relevance around political, positional, and general moral concerns. The question of obligation is as vital to examinations of political engagement as the equally pressing factors of justice, legitimacy and citizens' rights in liberal democratic societies, even (or especially) in the case of peaceful protest within these societies, as the previous chapter showed, and the case studies will further examine.

This applicability does however have its drawbacks, as can be seen in some of the discussed limitations of obligation as a core concept. Firstly, as Pateman highlights in her analysis of *the Problem of Political Obligation*, the fact that obligation can be used to cover such a wide variety of contexts can

¹⁵⁶ Simmons, *Political Philosophy*, p. 39.

reduce it to a catch-all term which allows little scope for actual analysis of specific social and political situations.¹⁵⁷ This, compounded with Simmons' dissatisfaction with 'associative, transactional, or natural duty' justifications for citizens' obligations within a functioning democratic society¹⁵⁸ further demonstrates the issue of applicability with concepts of obligation examined in the above definitions, which would seem to detract from its appropriateness as a factor through which writers' political engagement may be examined.

Another limitation of obligation as a core consideration for this project leads on from this problem of application, namely the problem of portraying obligation as the definitive underlying factor in all aspects of political and social life. As was shown in Section 3.1., current research into the topic of obligation is divided on the ability of obligation theories to provide satisfactorily comprehensive models for political and social systems without significant gaps, with critics such as Pateman questioning the validity of obligation theories in practical affairs, and propositions such as Klosko's multiple principles defending the validity of obligation theory as a whole even in the event of specific theories' shortcomings in one particular area or another.

While these twin problems of application and comprehensiveness may appear to present major obstacles for the use of obligation as a core concept for the analysis of political engagement in this project, there is a solution to both. In a similar fashion to Klosko's multiple principles, theories of political, positional and moral obligation can be seen as complementary, mutually supporting and at times independent factors working alongside others. Because

¹⁵⁷ Pateman, pp. 11–12.

¹⁵⁸ Simmons, *Political Philosophy*, p. 49.

of this, the problem of application can be at least somewhat assuaged by the fact that not all aspects of every model of obligation need to be applied in equal measure to every context. Accordingly, the multi-faceted nature of obligations in relation to questions of politics or morality allow certain aspects of the concept to be applied in relevant contexts without the necessity of treating obligation as a general, abstract idea, in Pateman's terms. This also avoids the problem of trying to explain all forms of engagement and political action through the lens of obligation, when other factors can not only be acknowledged, but viewed as essential to the relevance of obligation in any given context.

Moreover, this distinction strengthens the relevance of obligation as a factor in the context of the West German peace movement during the 1980s rather than weakening it, as it allows this factor to come into play and be analysed where appropriate, but does not require it to provide a comprehensive answer to every aspect of the socio-political situation in the period in question. This therefore reinforces the contributory nature of engaged writers' status in relation to the peace movement. As my four case studies will demonstrate, writers' roles within the movement generally concerned instances which fell within their general areas of expertise, or where their influence could be put to good use, while the obligations supporting and justifying these acts of engagement did not necessarily extend to areas in which their contributions could not usefully be made.

3.4.2. Obligation within the peace movement

Following this relevance of the concept in relation to public engagement in general terms, the second reason why obligation is such an important factor for

examining issues relating to writers' engagement with the West German peace movement in this period in particular is that a great deal of the rhetoric used by writers and many others involved in these developments was saturated with themes of what *must* be done, as is understandable for the pressing issues examined in the previous chapter, including threats to the survival of humanity as a whole. As my case studies will examine in greater detail, this factor was prevalent not only in the contributions of engaged writers, but across the strata of the peace movement in terms of appeals to action, justifications for actions and positions, and more abstract debates surrounding the perceptions of war and the relationship between citizens and state. Furthermore, as with the definitions of different forms of obligation put forward in Section 3.2., these expressions of obligation also range from the highly personal to themes encompassing all of humanity, meaning that a wide variety of engagements with the theme of obligation is present in this regard as well. Interestingly, this presence of obligation as an acknowledged and discussed factor is not limited to a single form of engagement with the peace movement. As these case studies will show, these themes can be found just as frequently in the direct appeals for action and mobilisation in mass protest actions, discussion among peers within the scope of writers' summits and organisational affairs, as well as published materials dealing both directly and indirectly with the issues of war and peace.

Finally, it should be noted that engagement with the theme of obligation are by no means limited to the writers involved with the peace movement in this period, or even to the peace movement itself. Many facets of political discourse in this final stage of the Cold War were also rife with

discussions of obligation, including the West German state's obligations to represent its citizens, see to its national interests and at the same time engage with the prospect of facing a new war and the questions of necessary precautions and preparations. As such, obligations can be seen as a key factor in a number of lines of argumentation in and around the peace movement, meaning that a more detailed examination of this theme will be able to provide further analysis not only of the direct involvement of writers in the peace movement, but also provide additional insight into the social and political context in which this engagement took place.

3.5. Summary

This chapter has addressed its four primary objectives of examining the relevance of theories of obligation, providing relevant definitions, examining other models for writers' engagement in terms of symbolic power, and considering the application of the theoretical framework to the specific context at the heart of this project.

This overview has also achieved its secondary objectives of helping to establish the parameters of this project's theoretical framework and demonstrating the suitability of political, positional, and moral obligation as a theme running through the project as a whole. From this, it is possible to move on to a more specific target of investigation in the following chapter, which deals with the particular roles, expectations, and obligations of writers, from those specifically involved in the peace movement of the 1980s to the wider questions of these figures in the history of the Federal Republic and beyond.

Additionally, this chapter's analysis has aimed to highlight the importance of obligation not only as abstract theory, but also as a relevant factor in engagement, with particular emphasis on the importance of Klosko's multiple principle of obligation. As will be demonstrated in the following chapter with regards to obligations involved in defining and justifying the roles of writers, this principle is vital in viewing obligation not as a monolithic theory with one set of comprehensive rules for all possible scenarios, but instead as a varied array of political, positional, and moral factors, at times providing mutual support for one another, at times conflicting, and occasionally with one single form of obligation taking precedence over others.

Finally, to return once again to the three questions posed at the beginning of this chapter, what generally remarks can be made for the theories of obligation examined here? In terms of the allegiance of obligations, this chapter has demonstrated that the wide range of obligations put forward has an equally wide range of obligors and obligees. This can be seen in the political obligations owed primarily by citizens to government institutions and to each other, to the positional obligations owed by those who fulfil specific positions with a range of possible recipients including others relying on the fulfilment of the role and the role itself, to the more openly interpreted moral obligations, which depend heavily on the individuals and moral principles involved.

This variety also applies to the extent and limitations of obligation, with political obligations largely applying to the conduct of citizens and their interactions with the state, positional obligations depending on the extent and limitations of the positions occupied, and moral obligations again depending on the moral principles and their interpretations by individuals taking them on.

4. The roles of writers

Following the overview of the peace movement and the examination of the models of obligation in the previous two chapters, this chapter forms the third and final part of this project's theoretical framework by analysing a range of expected social and political roles of engaged writers along with their associated obligations. In addition, this chapter aims to include further contextualisation for the application of these roles and their associated obligations in this project's case studies.

The questions of what is meant by the term 'writer', and why their engagement and roles should be considered important are deceptively simple. For the purposes of my analysis, the most basic definition of a writer takes its cue from the membership criteria of the Verband deutscher Schriftsteller, including any individual working with the written word through published works, whether in fiction, non-fiction, translation, critique or any other field or genre.¹⁵⁹ While this is a somewhat broad definition of writers, it is sufficient for my analysis, which includes a wide range of individuals within this category, but focusses on the engagement of these figures through the spoken and written word, in order to provide a focussed analysis with clearer comparisons and parallels between their contributions to the peace movement and the models of roles and obligations which underpin them.

While several of the theoretical works examined in this chapter examine issues relating to the broader category of intellectuals, or writers acting in a capacity as intellectuals, my analysis focusses on writers, with

¹⁵⁹ Verband deutscher Schriftsteller, 'Verband deutscher Schriftsteller (VS) Fachgruppe Literatur', 1989.

overlap between the positions of writers and intellectuals in a more general sense being used exclusively to provide additional insight into the roles, expectations, and obligations of writers.

Leading on from this, the basic definition of the term ‘engaged writer’ is extended to any writer who uses this public presence to seek to contribute to and exert influence in political and social discourses either through written work or other means, following David Schalk’s definition of engagement as:

The political or social action of an intellectual who has realised that abstention is a ruse, a commitment to the *status quo*, and who makes a conscious and wilful choice to enter the arena, never abandoning his or her critical judgement.¹⁶⁰

This factor of critical judgement is of central importance to the varied models of writers’ engagement and obligations which will be examined over the course of this chapter. While each of these models emphasises to at least some degree the importance of critical judgement in relation to the roles of writers, the question of how this judgement should be preserved in terms of critical distance from the social and political issues with which writers engage produces considerably more diverse answers. Accordingly, in addition to addressing the three key questions outlined above, the five key models of writers’ roles and obligations examined in this chapter each provide their own perspectives on the issue of critical distance, and are ordered in this analysis from the most detached to the most actively engaged, but still, in Schalk’s terms, never abandoning the factor of critical judgement.

¹⁶⁰ David L Schalk, p. 25.

The roles of writers in the Federal Republic have by no means been static, and underwent a great deal of development throughout the post-war period. This development has been examined in great detail in a range of analyses of literature in the Federal Republic such as Helmut Peitsch's *Nachkriegsliteratur 1945-1989*¹⁶¹ and *Vom Faschismus zum Kalten Krieg*,¹⁶² and Ralf Schnell's *Literatur der Bundesrepublik*,¹⁶³ along with works focussing specifically on the relative positions of literature and politics such as K. Stuart Parkes's *Writers and Politics in Germany 1945-2008*,¹⁶⁴ all of which contribute to a complex and varied picture of the developing roles of writers in the West German context. Perspectives on the specific roles of engaged writers in the Federal Republic have ranged from providing an ethical basis for a new West German state following the 'Nullpunkt' of 1945¹⁶⁵ to a conception of intellectuals as 'legitime Kritiker von Gesellschaft und Politik' during the 1960s,¹⁶⁶ followed by a 'Delegitimierung als unzuständig und insofern gefährlich' in a political climate which became somewhat more hostile towards intellectual engagement by the late 1970s.¹⁶⁷ These brief descriptions are not representative of all attitudes towards these figures in this period, and will be examined in greater detail over the course of this chapter.

As with the previous two components of my theoretical framework, this analysis cannot aim to provide a complete history of the post-war literary

¹⁶¹ Helmut Peitsch, *Nachkriegsliteratur 1945-1989* (Göttingen: V&R Unipress, 2009).

¹⁶² Helmut Peitsch, *Vom Faschismus zum Kalten Krieg : Auch eine deutsche Literaturgeschichte* (Berlin: Sigma, 1996).

¹⁶³ Ralf Schnell, *Die Literatur der Bundesrepublik: Autoren, Geschichte, Literaturbetrieb* (Stuttgart: Metzler, 1986).

¹⁶⁴ Parkes, *Writers and Politics in Germany, 1945-2008*.

¹⁶⁵ Peitsch, *Nachkriegsliteratur 1945-1989*, p. 13.

¹⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 206.

¹⁶⁷ Peitsch, *Nachkriegsliteratur 1945-1989*, p. 206.

field in West Germany, or a definitive model of the political and social roles of engaged writers. Instead, this chapter will assess a number of roles concerning active engagement with political and social issues, while at the same time providing the necessary background detail to contextualise these actions. These writers' roles have been selected for their relevance in relation to the overarching goals of this project based on three criteria. Firstly, the roles examined in this chapter set out particular social functions for writers. Secondly, these social functions are based on theoretical models of the ideals to which writers should aspire, and the obligations involved in taking on these roles. Thirdly, each of the roles examined in this chapter raises issues which are particularly relevant to the obligations and justifications involved in the instances of writers' engagement analysed in my case studies. On the basis of these criteria, the roles of writers selected for analysis in this chapter will provide the final section of context for a closer study of writers' contributions to the West German peace movement in the 1980s throughout the following four case studies.

The themes of writers' expected roles will also draw heavily on the concept of obligations, expanding on the previous chapter's analysis with a more detailed application to the expectations and traditions associated with these figures, particularly in the West German context. However, as with the thematic approach in the rest of this chapter, this exploration of positional obligations will avoid too narrow a focus on specific instances or specific individuals, in order to present an overview which can be more easily applied in later close analysis. While positional obligations are important in the context of engaged writers' roles, the additional questions of political and moral

obligations are rarely far from discussions of these individuals' public status and function.

This investigation of a number of positions and goals aims to contribute to the understanding of how the roles of engaged writers have been defined and perceived. To this end, this chapter provides an overview of a number of relevant theories of intellectual roles, bearing the following three key questions in mind:

- What factors define a writer's expected roles?
- What obligations are involved?
- What is the relevance of these roles and expectations to the West German peace movement?

By examining the answers proposed to these questions by each of the selected models, this chapter will provide more general context for the expectations and obligations associated with writers' engagement. Therefore, in addition to the primary goal of defining relevant roles ascribed to engaged writers and secondary goal of providing context for this project's case studies, this chapter has a tertiary goal of analysing the theoretical basis for these roles.

4.1. Detachment

The first model of engaged writers' roles and obligations which should be considered is a distinctly reserved one, casting writers in the role of detached observers independent of prevailing social, political, and cultural developments. While it may appear strange to approach forms of public engagement by first examining a model of writers' roles opposed to the involvement of these figures in political and social discourses, the conception

of a necessary abstention from engagement is an important part of the varied roles and expectations associated with writers, in addition to providing further insight into the issue of engagement itself.

In his definition of symbolic power examined previously, Pierre Bourdieu shows the influence of potentially conflicting positional obligations inherent in the intellectual's position between the poles of culture and politics, and furthermore presents a solution to these conflicts with an autonomous role defined by a principle of disinterest based on the competence in these figures' own fields. However, Bourdieu is also quick to note that 'the fact of finding oneself thus at "end game" does not necessarily lead to disenchantment'.¹⁶⁸ This is to say that the reserved position put forward based partly on the necessity of autonomy and partly on the preceding experiences and developments which have led to such an 'end game' does not mean a complete detachment from political, social, or cultural issues, but instead acts as a basis for informed commentary on political and social affairs. Indeed, as John Marks argues in his comparative analysis of intellectual activity in France and Germany, such an aversion to direct commitment to political causes can be viewed as a necessary course of action for the preservation of writers' autonomy, which can in turn provide the basis for more effective forms of commentary and non-partisan political and social influence.¹⁶⁹ This model of necessary detachment highly values the critical distance of writers from social

¹⁶⁸ Pierre Bourdieu and Susan Emanuel, *The Rules of Art* (Stanford: University Press, 1996), p. 343; Pierre Bourdieu, *Les règles de l'art: genèse et structure du champ littéraire* (Paris: Edns du Seuil, 1998), p. 551. '[L]e fait de se trouver ainsi en "fin de partie" ne conduit pas nécessairement au désenchantement.'

¹⁶⁹ John Marks, 'Models of the Intellectual in Contemporary France and Germany: Silence and Communication', in *Politics and Culture in Twentieth-Century Germany* (Rochester, NY: Camden House, 2003), p. 258.

and political issues, but even this strongly enforced model of distance and independence does not envision absolute separation of writers from the rest of society, even when active engagement is not supported.

As has been previously mentioned, the actual positions taken on by engaged writers have varied greatly across different socio-political contexts and periods. It should therefore be noted that this idea proposed by Bourdieu and further examined by Marks does not necessarily correlate with a particular state of affairs, and is more concerned with a general sense of how these figures are regarded as social actors, or perhaps in a more abstract sense, how this role *should* be. With this, Bourdieu's perspective on the detachment of writers and intellectuals is similar to Joseph Schumpeter's conception of these influential individuals:

Intellectuals are in fact people who wield the power of the spoken and the written word, and one of the touches that distinguish them from other people who do the same is the absence of direct responsibility for practical affairs.¹⁷⁰

With this definition, Schumpeter emphasises an additional component of this necessarily detached social role, which is facilitated by a lack of 'responsibility for practical affairs', characterised as primarily political and economic decision making, therefore allowing writers in their capacity as intellectuals to fulfil a social role independent of these concerns without abandoning the positional obligations linked to more 'practical' roles of politicians or other representative public figures. In contrast to the positional

¹⁷⁰ Joseph A Schumpeter, *Capitalism, Socialism and Democracy* (London: Unwin University Books, 1954), p. 147.

obligations examined in the previous chapter and the more actively engaged roles put forward in the rest of this chapter, this lack of direct responsibility in Schumpeter's conception also serves to reinforce the separation of intellectuals from direct engagement. Thus, this conception views writers along with other intellectuals in general as outsiders offering insight into events in which they do not have a vested interest. Indeed, Schumpeter's non-involved position presents the detachment of writers and other intellectuals from practical affairs as crucial to the fulfilment of a value-based social role, in which the ability to represent universal truths, values, and ideals independent from mainstream political and social developments can be seen as a central role of writers, facilitated by the detachment and critical distance of these figures.¹⁷¹

An extreme perspective on this detachment is expressed in the French philosopher Julien Benda's conception of *la Trahison des Clercs*, in which he argues that writers and other intellectuals must either maintain their detachment from social and political issues by abstaining entirely from engagement, or take on a comprehensive position which makes a meaningful contribution to social and political discourse. Benda argues that acts of engagement which provide nothing more than general moral judgements both abandon the dignified position of detachment and fail to provide substantial position of their own, and therefore reduces these forms of engagement to 'dilettantism, which constitutes an intellectual betrayal in moral terms'.¹⁷²

¹⁷¹ Schumpeter, p. 147.

¹⁷² Julien Benda, *La Trahison Des Clercs* (Paris: Edns Bernard Grasset, 1927) Préface de la nouvelle édition, 69. 'Dilettantisme, laquelle constitue, singulièrement en fait de morale, une insigne trahison de clerc.' Translation my own.

While Benda's argument encompasses all manner of intellectuals under the term 'clerc', engaged writers as a specific group are included as figures whose main areas of expertise do not extend beyond the written word into political or social affairs. As will be shown in this project's case studies, this perspective has by no means been unique to Benda, and serves as the basis for numerous criticisms of writers' engagement with the West German peace movement across varied contexts, from criticisms of writers' dabbling in protest actions examined in Chapter 5, to the debates between writers over their ability or authority to intervene in political developments analysed in Chapter 7.

In outlining this position, Benda highlights three important points regarding the status of writers and the positional obligations which define it. Firstly, defining vague judgements of value and morality as dilettantism shows a key divide between the appropriate domains of writers and political discourse. While Schumpeter asserts that intellectuals' lack of expertise in practical affairs defines a particular role for their engagement, Benda argues that this means that intellectuals' involvement with serious political issues cannot be undertaken lightly, as the abandonment of detachment and the lack of practical expertise must be replaced by substantial and well thought out positions if they are to be meaningful at all.

Secondly, Benda defines certain areas such as history and psychology as suitably objective to not constitute a betrayal of intellectuals' detached roles. This therefore proposes a pressing positional obligation on the part of these figures to remain within their detached, objective subject areas unless prepared to make a well-informed and comprehensive foray into political engagement.

This is partly in order to put the expertise associated with their role to good use, and partly in order to preserve the association of this expertise with the roles and detached status of writers and intellectuals in general. This is therefore similar to Jäger's conception of writers as 'Wissenshalter', presiding over knowledge, but presents the more limited terms of restricting their role to particular areas, rather than using their knowledge as a justification for engagement in a wider social context.¹⁷³

Thirdly, by treating the descent into insufficiently supported political affairs in the name of the 'sacred character of the writer'¹⁷⁴ or "“relativism” for good or ill"¹⁷⁵ as equal acts of betrayal, Benda reveals the importance associated with the detached status in this conception of writers' roles. If such a role were deemed irrelevant then the evocative language of 'betrayal' would be somewhat unnecessary, but Benda argues that writers' dilettantism constitutes a breach of the key positional obligations to detachment and objectivity which define the role. Benda therefore frames this form of writers' public engagement as illegitimate, as it rejects the positional obligations towards detachment, but also fails to make a meaningful contribution to social and political discussions in its own right.

One further expansion on the concept of a necessary divide between the spheres of writers and politicians can be found in a specifically German context in which, in the analysis of Niven and Jordan:

¹⁷³ Georg Jäger, 'Der Schriftsteller als Intellektueller: Ein Problemaufriß', in *Schriftsteller als Intellektuelle: Politik und Literatur im Kalten Krieg* (Tübingen, 2000), p. 5.

¹⁷⁴ Benda, p. 65. 'Caractère sacré de l'écrivain', translation my own.

¹⁷⁵ Benda, p. 65. "“Relativisme” du bien et du mal', translation my own.

This decoupling of “Geist” and “Macht”, culture and state, culture and civilization led to a tradition of German inwardness’ throughout the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.¹⁷⁶

As a result of this uneasiness over interactions between the realms of ideas and of politics, the phenomenon of inwardness, or ‘Innerlichkeit’, can be viewed as an avoidance of any form of political engagement on the side of those more concerned with ideas, including writers and other intellectuals. This applied not only in terms of personal abstention, but as a central positional obligation of the public roles of writers.

While theories of necessary intellectual detachment remained important in the early twentieth century, their influence waned considerably as the century progressed. In the context of Germany in particular, conceptions of inwardness as a central obligation for writers became much less accepted, firstly in the aftermath of the First World War, and secondly following the Nazi dictatorship. By the ending of the Second World War and founding of the Federal Republic of Germany, the conception of inwardness as a specific and necessary trait of German writers and other intellectuals had been generally discredited. While this did not mean that all texts published after 1945 were inherently political, or that all writers in the Federal Republic were expected to be politically engaged, inwardness and abstention from social and political discussions were no longer seen as general requirements for these figures. At the same time, however, the criticisms and debates surrounding writers’ direct engagement with causes such as the protests in the late 1960s, and continuing

¹⁷⁶ William John Niven and James Jordan, *Politics and Culture in Twentieth-Century Germany* (Rochester, NY: Camden House, 2003), p. 4.

into the 1970s and 1980s, show that expectations of a degree of distance from political and social issues still influenced perceptions of the roles of writers in relation to the peace movement to a certain extent.

To summarise these conceptions of detachment as a necessary role, it is useful to return to this chapter's three main questions. For the question of what defines writers' roles, this model emphasises the importance of a higher calling that goes beyond the concerns of politics and society, and therefore requires the detachment and retention of critical distance on the part of writers in order to fulfil their limited societal role. Moreover, this detached role is reinforced by a range of obligations, including moral obligations to uphold the values associated with their work, and political obligations to remain outside mainstream political debate. With this in mind, the main relevance of this model of writers' roles and expectations for this project is to show a position and a set of expectations which are effectively rejected by the forms of direct public engagement with the peace movement at the centre of my thesis. However, the factors of necessary critical distance and the role of writers in presiding over general truths and societal values remain relevant in relation to some examples of engagement which will be examined in this project's case studies, even if the ideas of this engagement risking a descent into unqualified dilettantism or a betrayal of writers' sacred roles are not entirely accepted.

4.2. Authority to speak for others

In contrast with the detached positions examined in the previous section, a second interpretation of writers' roles puts forward a somewhat more active position, using their status and expertise in order to speak on behalf of other members of society who are less able to have their voices heard in open

discourse. However, this does not mean that the issue of writers' critical distance is entirely disregarded when acting in this function. In order to establish and maintain both the representative authority to speak on behalf of others, and the position from which this role can be undertaken, a degree of distance between engaged writers and mainstream political and social developments is expected, particularly in appeals to knowledge, expertise, or a particular social position as justifications for this representative role.

This conception of writers as having the task of speaking for others implies firstly that in order to fulfil this role, the engaged figures in question must have the necessary expertise to speak authoritatively and pass judgement on these subjects, and secondly, but no less importantly, that other citizens either lack this expertise, or lack the necessary position from which their voices and judgements can be made known. This situation therefore entails not only obligations and responsibilities associated with writers' engagement, but also demonstrates a particular privilege associated with their position. As the various debates surrounding the practical roles of engaged writers in the context of the West German peace movement will demonstrate in my case studies, this role and the authority on which it is based have been the subject of extensive discussion. However, before analysing these issues, the role itself and its justifications must be examined.

Perhaps the most direct form of justification for this authority can be found in the appeal to expertise in relation to Foucault's conception of the specialised intellectual viewed as a 'savant-expert',¹⁷⁷ which substitutes a claim to knowledge spread across a wide range of topics in the name of intellectual

¹⁷⁷ Foucault, 'La Fonction Politique de L'intellectuel', p. 32.

universality for a more focussed specialisation on particular issues and particular areas. The writers in question are not only supremely qualified to speak on the basis of their intellectual status, but as a result of the generality of their expertise. Additionally, they are subject to a specific positional obligation to use this expertise in the form of engagement and contributions to public discourse, based on their authority afforded by this status.

However, there is a second form of justification linked to this demonstration of expertise in certain areas which proves somewhat more problematic, in that the claim that writers are able – or indeed faced with the obligation – to speak for others implies that these other people are unable to speak for themselves and must instead be led. This conception of engaged writers claiming representative authority because others will not is put forward in Schumpeter's analysis of intellectuals' role in capitalist societies:

The mass of people never develops definite opinions on its own initiative. Still less is it able to articulate them and to turn them into consistent attitudes and actions. All it can do is to follow or refuse to follow such group leadership as may offer itself.¹⁷⁸

Accordingly, a more moderate form of the claim that publicly engaged writers hold the authority to speak for others who are unable to speak for themselves may be put forward, in that this authority is established through persuasive discourse, and that those individuals perceived to hold this authority and associated obligations act on behalf of others do so on the basis of the ideas which they represent.

¹⁷⁸ Schumpeter, p. 145.

The persuasive aspect of this representative function is further supported by Georg Jäger's comparison of intellectuals to professionals and experts:

Der Experte kann sich auf fachspezifische Fähigkeiten und Kenntnisse berufen, die er in der Regel in einer Ausbildung erworben und durch Prüfungen nachgewiesen hat. [...] Da der Intellektuelle mit universellen, also unspezifischen Normen arbeitet, entbehrt seine Rede der sozialen Kompetenzsicherung; sie erfolgt nicht im Rahmen einer Profession, sie ist fachlich nicht gedeckt und insofern inkompetent.¹⁷⁹

While this description of incompetence in relation to subject-specific material may appear to detract from the perceived suitability of writers to speak on behalf of others, the fact that the forms of expertise demonstrated by politically engaged writers are not tied to specific professions, classes or disciplines greatly improves their persuasive authority in relation to public discourse. By acting not as insular professionals but rather as 'Fachleute eines integrierenden Dilettantismus'¹⁸⁰ as Dirks argues, the non-subject specific expertise of intellectuals therefore provides an approachable basis from which the esoteric parlance of experts in specific fields may be interpreted. With this, Dirks presents a different perspective on writers as dilettantes to that of Benda as examined in the previous section. While Benda warns of the risks of writers' engagement leading to an uninformed and fruitless foray into political and social issues which betrays their core principles, Jäger and Dirks argue that this status as outsiders without specific expertise can be used to support public

¹⁷⁹ Jäger, 'Der Schriftsteller als Intellektueller: Ein Problemaufriß', p. 7.

¹⁸⁰ Walter Dirks and others, *Sagen was ist: politische Publizistik 1950-1968* (Zürich: Ammann, 1988), p. 29.

engagement rather than hinder it, albeit in different forms to experts in specific fields.

Moreover, a similar line of justification through positional obligation to the Foucauldian concept of the *savant-expert* can be identified. While Foucault argues that the specific expertise of intellectuals such as writers produces an obligation to put this expertise to use by speaking for non-experts, Jäger's perspective on writers as non-experts concerned with universal norms ends up presenting a similar positional obligation for these non-experts to use their use their particular position to speak on behalf of other non-experts who would not be in a position to have their voices heard, or present their points of view to a wider audience on their own.

This position therefore further reinforces the importance of critical distance in defining and justifying the representative roles of engaged writers, in that this position is only possible to maintain in the absence of strict ties to any particular group. In the context of a diverse movement such as the West German peace movement in the 1980s, this provided a useful unifying effect for both writers and other contributors in some cases, but in others also proved to be problematic in its own right, as the case studies in the following chapters will show.

An additional problem with this role can be found in the unelected, or even undemocratic way in which this authority is established and maintained within democratic societies. As can be seen in arguments made by writers and other figures in the post-war period, the roles of engaged writers in the Federal Republic have been closely tied to the functioning of democratic society in the

form of ‘Gewissen der Nation’,¹⁸¹ and guarantors of open discourse.¹⁸² This second argument by the East German writer Arnold Zweig stands out as particularly important, partly in its external observations on the status of writers in the Federal Republic, partly in its implications that these positional obligations did not apply uniquely to the positions of West German engaged writers, but most importantly in the contrast made between the oppressive control of fascism and the fundamentally anti-fascist openness which is (or at least, as Zweig argues, should be) represented by engaged writers.

In addition to these open roles, somewhat more problematic interpretations of engaged writers’ representative capacity can also be found in this context, including aspirations to more concrete political influence in reaction to the presence of ‘etwas faul im Staat Democracy’,¹⁸³ and even extending to writers’ own contributions to ‘Außerparlamentarische Opposition’ despite lacking any form of democratic mandate of their own.¹⁸⁴ These questions of democracy are particularly pressing in the context of writers’ contributions to protest and opposition movements throughout the history of the Federal Republic, ranging from the anti-governmental attitudes in the protest movements of the 1960s to accusations of sympathy and even support for left-extremist terrorism in the 1970s, all of which remained very

¹⁸¹ *Vaterland, Muttersprache: Deutsche Schriftsteller und ihr Staat seit 1945: Ein Nachlesebuch für die Oberstufe*, ed. by Klaus Wagenbach, Winfried Stephan, and Michael Krüger, Quartheft; 100 (Berlin: K. Wagenbach, 1979), p. 12.

¹⁸² Arnold Zweig, ‘Die wichtigste gesellschaftliche Funktion des Schriftstellers’, in *Vaterland, Muttersprache*, p. 95.

¹⁸³ Peter Rühmkopf, ‘Dämonokratie’, in *Vaterland, Muttersprache*, p. 141.

¹⁸⁴ Peter Handke, ‘Bemerkung zu einem Gerichtsurteil’, in *Vaterland, Muttersprache*, p. 248.

relevant to debate over the roles of writers in relation to the state in the context of the peace movement of the 1980s.

One particularly vehement critique of these privileged roles can be seen in Helmut Schelsky's 1975 tract *Die Arbeit tun die Anderen*,¹⁸⁵ which argues that the political engagement of writers along with other intellectuals – at least in the context of Western democracies in the late twentieth century – amounted not only to an undemocratic accumulation of power, but:

Die Bildung einer neuen Herrschaftsgruppe der Intellektuellen, die sowohl als Priesterherrschaft als auch als Klassenherrschaft verstanden werden kann.¹⁸⁶

Schelsky goes on to argue that this domination is established through the use of writers' authority to speak for others in order to silence ordinary citizens and secure their own monopoly on the use of language:

Das entscheidende Produktionsmittel dieser Klasse der Sinnproduzenten aber ist die Sprache; ihre Monopolisierung verbürgt die Klassenherrschaft.¹⁸⁷

This critique therefore puts forward a more sinister perspective on Bourdieu's concept of a 'monopoly of the professionals' examined in the previous chapter, presenting symbolic power not as a mechanism of social

¹⁸⁵ Helmut Schelsky, *Die Arbeit tun die anderen: Klassenkampf und Priesterherrschaft der Intellektuellen* 2nd edn (Opladen: Westdeutscher Verlag, 1975).

¹⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 9.

¹⁸⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 233–34.

activities (mis)recognised as arbitrary by its users,¹⁸⁸ but as a deliberate conspiracy to establish intellectuals' authority at the expense of others through manipulation of open discourse. Although Schelsky by no means represented mainstream opinions on engaged intellectuals in the Federal Republic, and instead offered an extreme conservative perspective with his dismissal of their influence, his argument remains relevant to my analysis of engaged writers by highlighting issues with the status and legitimacy which underpinned their positions.

If writers should be considered to have the authority to speak for others and thereby represent their interests, how and by whom can this arrangement be regulated in order to assure that the position is not exploited, or at the very least subjected to the personal demands of the individuals undertaking them? In opposition to Schelsky's assertion that no such oversight exists for such an undemocratic group, one answer could be that the negotiated authority to speak for others which forms the basis of this position ensures that it is denied lasting stability. Indeed, a move away from the principles on which the status is based would inherently result in a loss of persuasive power, and accordingly of the authority to hold the position. Another interpretation of the issues examined in this section is that no such regulation exists, and that the legitimacy of knowledge engaged with by writers as well as that of the individuals themselves is almost entirely tautologically defined, with certain values, truths, and areas of knowledge upheld as worthy of protection because they are viewed as such by writers, and that in turn the writers themselves are viewed as worthy of this function by right of their particular expertise in relation to

¹⁸⁸ Pierre Bourdieu and others, *Language and Symbolic Power* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2008), p. 172.

these objects. Finally, as can be seen in the range of perspectives on and claims to representative authority examined in this chapter, the class-based monopoly on speech was by no means as absolute or sinister as Schelsky argues. While representative authority may be established, it is the product of a multitude of voices, and maintained by the perceived legitimacy of the status, trustworthiness, and in some cases expertise of those figures involved. As a number of this project's case studies will demonstrate, this arrangement was somewhat tenuous, and was at times particularly fragile in relation to engagement with the peace movement when the factors and status supporting it were called into question.

For the purposes of my overarching analysis and this chapter's central questions, the roles of writers in this model can generally be defined as holding a position of authority to speak for others who are less able to have their voices heard in public debates on the basis of writers' expertise, knowledge, and public presence, often in the form of non-specific legitimacy established through previous work and status. The roles of these figures also include expectations of putting this knowledge to good use and upholding social values through public engagement, although never abandoning the central factor of critical distance, which provides further justification for the acts of engagement, and helps to maintain the position from which it can be made. The main positional obligations involved in this role are dependent on the particular social position taken on by engaged writers in their role as representatives of larger, unheard groups. As my case studies in the following four chapters will demonstrate, these representative roles and obligations played a significant role in defining and justifying the contributions of writers

to the wider peace movement. They were also at times problematic, both in terms of writers' ability to represent others in their engagement with the peace movement, and in discussions of their own public positions.

4.3. Moral authority

Leading on from the issues involved in writers' representative capacity, a similar set of roles and expectations can be found in the conception of writers' status as guardians and arbiters of social values imbuing the actions and engagement of these figures with a particular moral authority. As with the role of speaking for others in the previous section, this model of engaged writers' roles emphasises a sense of distance from mainstream political and social developments in order to base their legitimacy on higher truths and values, but focusses on the representation of moral concerns, and therefore places more emphasis on moral obligations to intervene in political and social developments without necessarily requiring the same degree of distance from the issues at hand.

This sense of engaged writers providing an intellectual guiding hand in the re-establishment of a moral authority in West Germany is most clearly evident in the immediate aftermath of the Second World War and continuing to the foundation of a distinct West German nation state, particularly in relation to the *Trümmerliteratur* movement which defined and encapsulated an atmosphere 'zwischen "reeducation" und Restauration',¹⁸⁹ in which – as Parkes argues – the 'intense intellectual activity' in the debates surrounding the justification of these developments carried an undeniable weight'.¹⁹⁰ This does

¹⁸⁹ Ralf Schnell, *Die Literatur der Bundesrepublik*, p. 80.

¹⁹⁰ Parkes, *Writers and Politics in Germany, 1945-2008*, p. 23.

not however mean that the moral aspect of political engagement in this period was oriented along one specific line or unified behind a single proposition, as the analyses of Peitsch and Jäger show:

Im Nachkriegsdeutschland war quer durch die Fraktionen "die Aufgabe der Literatur primär ethisch bestimmt",¹⁹¹ trat der Schriftsteller als "Gewissen der Nation" auf und knüpfte damit an die spezifisch deutsche Rede von der Kulturnation an. Der Kalte Krieg veranlaßte viele Schriftsteller, in einer moralischen Sprecherrolle aufzutreten, der jedoch durch die politische Definition und propagandistische Indienstnahme zentraler humanistischer Werte – objektiv gesehen – der Boden entzogen wurde.¹⁹²

This description of a particular form of moral authority shows two key aspects of the morally aligned positional obligations at work. Firstly, Peitsch's observation of a primarily ethical engagement which transcended political factions and ideological lines reinforces the conception of writers' moral authority being based on a position of non-conformity with an independent status outside of mainstream political discourse.¹⁹³ Consequently, the fact that this form of engagement is portrayed as independent of positional obligations to these other groups allows the moral obligations of engaged writers to be presented in a universal sense. The general moral obligations put forward as

¹⁹¹ Helmut Peitsch, 'Politisierung Der Literatur', in *Nachkriegsliteratur in Westdeutschland. Bd. 2, Autoren, Sprache, Traditionen*, ed. by Jost Hermand, Helmut Peitsch and Klaus R. Scherpe (Hamburg: Argument, 1983), p. 189.

¹⁹² Jäger, 'Der Schriftsteller als Intellektueller: Ein Problemaufriß', p. 18.

¹⁹³ Helmut Peitsch, 'Zur Vorgeschichte des Hamburger Streitgesprächs Deutscher Autoren aus Ost Und West: Die Rezeption des Konzepts ›Engagement‹ in Der BRD und in der DDR, " in *Schriftsteller als Intellektuelle: Politik und Literatur im Kalten Krieg*, 308.

universally shared are reinforced on the part of engaged intellectuals by a set of morally focussed positional obligations which elevate the social role of intellectuals to something beyond the influence of party politics, or the biases of particular ideologies, groups or politicians. This therefore allows not only an engagement with political and social affairs, but also the objective and morally authoritative nature of these positions to be further emphasised. Thus, statements over the pitiable living conditions of many German citizens in Wolfgang Borchert's *Das Brot*¹⁹⁴ or Heinrich Böll's treatment of unstable employment in *Der Mann mit den Messern*¹⁹⁵ can be viewed as distinct from populist rhetoric or posturing in favour of or in opposition to one political party or another, but rather takes on an independent character of legitimacy and authority on these matters. Furthermore, this form of engagement through literary works not only allowed writers to take on issues as independent moral authorities, but also allowed these figures the legitimacy which supported more direct forms of engagement and socio-political commentary, in some cases retaining the position of moral authority and in others taking on different roles. However, these forms of engagement and the obligations involved in defining and supporting them can at times be somewhat problematic, both in the context of post-war West Germany and in relation to the peace movement in the 1980s, as will be demonstrated in my analysis of the debates surrounding the positions of writers and appropriate forms of engagement in Chapters 6 and 7 in particular.

¹⁹⁴ Wolfgang Borchert, "Das Brot," in *Wolfgang Borchert, Draußen vor der Tür und ausgewählte Erzählungen* (Hamburg: Rowohlt, 1956), pp. 105–06.

¹⁹⁵ Heinrich Böll, *Der Mann mit den Messern* (Stuttgart: Philipp Reclam, 1972).

Additionally, this independent position was not quite as absolute as it may have first appeared. Jäger's emphasis on the context of the Cold War further reinforces this sense of legitimacy not only on the part of writers, but for the social and political system in which they worked. In the particular context of post-war West Germany, promoting engaged writers as moral authorities served to reinforce the legitimacy and ethical foundation of the Federal Republic, even in the case of general moral obligations not necessarily leading to engagement in partisan politics. However, the instrumentalisation of literature as a legitimisation for the Federal Republic was not the explicit intention of the vast majority of works in this period, either for the authors or for the state itself, and this effect can retrospectively be seen more as a by-product of engaged writers' status as moral authorities rather than an intentional construction for political purposes.

Leading on from the sense of legitimacy associated with intellectual contributions to public discourse in the Federal Republic, a second element of writers' authority provided in Jäger's analysis is that the role of 'Gewissen der Nation' – a term originally conceived of to describe Heinrich Böll, much to the chagrin of Böll himself, but equally applicable to a wider range of scenarios¹⁹⁶ – shows a further non-partisan but not entirely universal aspect of this authority. In contrast to Foucault's assertion that the traditional concept of intellectual activity amounted to: 'être intellectuel, c'était être un peu la conscience de tous',¹⁹⁷ the concept of acting as a national conscience, or at least having the expectation to fulfil this role, ties the writers concerned into a

¹⁹⁶ 'Schriftsteller Böll: Brot und Boden', *Der Spiegel*, 6 1961, 50/1961 edn, pp. 71–86 (p. 72).

¹⁹⁷ Foucault, 'La Fonction Politique de L'intellectuel', p. 31.

form of involvement with national discourses. As with the obligations to individual moral codes discussed above, this expectation of acting as a national conscience shows another way in which the concerns of partisan engagement may be avoided, with allegiances owed not to one group, but to a perceived higher calling at a 'national' level, which as Jäger's analysis shows, need not correspond to a nationalistic concern as a result of its independence from the political structures of nation states.

This moral authority was by no means limited to the immediate post-war period. The characterisation and perception of writers' moral authority in their engagement with political and public discourse underwent a series of important developments throughout the history of the Federal Republic, and continued to play a major role up to and including the period of 1979-1985. The more generalised sense of this form of corrective engagement concerns these individuals and the ideas which they represent acting as counterweights to the moral ambiguity of political affairs, with the relative purity of ideas backed by moral authority contrasting with the messiness of their application in political affairs, despite the occasional fallibility of those engaged writers aspiring to embody moral principles through their engagement. As the case studies in this project will show, attempts to act in the capacity of a moral authority did not necessarily exempt individuals from the more personal concerns and differences of opinion inherent in many contributions to wider discussions.

This conception of moral authority does not however necessarily translate to an obligation to take direct action in all political activity, as can be seen in David Schalk's estimation of writers' engagement:

Their engagement provides an ethical ingredient in political life which otherwise would be lacking. Since it is nearly impossible to separate out the effect of their political involvement from the ebb and flow of broader historical events such as wars and revolutions, the most they could hope for would be that their engagement could check upon the greed and ambition of their rulers.¹⁹⁸

This then should be considered the primary form of generalised moral authority when considering the roles expected of engaged writers, and is given an additional element of urgency in the context of engagement with the peace movement in the face of potentially catastrophic nuclear war. In this case, the function as a moral authority aimed not only to act as a check on worrying political developments with the continued functioning of the polity or the society at stake, but also included arguments for the continued existence of humanity. For this reason, the sense of necessary distance from political and social issues can be seen to be less heavily emphasised in the case of writers' roles centring on the big questions of morality and the future of human civilisation, and the general moral obligations underpinning these lines of argumentation, which as Chapter 2 showed were shared by many other contributors to the peace movement in this period.

Returning to this chapter's central themes, the question of what defines writers' roles in this model is somewhat more general than in others, essentially characterising engaged writers as having the required legitimacy and representative capacity to embody moral values in a wider social and political context. From this, a further role can be found in bringing this 'ethical

¹⁹⁸ David L Schalk, p. 112.

ingredient' into effect in political and other public discourses, acting as a stabilising agent in what could otherwise be an unscrupulous environment rather than seeking to guide developments directly. This engagement is therefore underpinned by general moral obligations to uphold these values, but also by non-specific political obligations which promote direct engagement in political affairs without favouring any one particular party. With this in mind, the status of engaged writers as moral authorities retained a form of relevance beyond the immediate post-war period and into the context of the 1980s, as the questions of the morality of war and peace along with ethical ingredients in political life proved particularly relevant in relation to the peace movement.

4.4. Bearing witness

Another perspective on the issue of critical distance in the roles and obligations of engaged writers can be found in the expectation of these figures to bear witness to social and political developments. As with the moral authority role examined in the previous section, this model puts forward an active, critical role in relation to troubling developments, but the factor of retaining distance is diminished somewhat by the lesser emphasis on the status of writers as representatives of objective moral ideals, and a greater emphasis on critical commentary and speaking out and drawing attention to the issues at hand. This theme can be interpreted as being motivated by 'historical impulse', as George Orwell argues in his seminal 1946 essay *Why I Write*, as a 'desire to see things as they are, to find out true facts and store them up for the use of posterity',¹⁹⁹

¹⁹⁹ George Orwell, 'Why I Write' (Gangrel, 1946)
 <http://www.orwell.ru/library/essays/wiw/english/e_wiw> [accessed 20 November 2012].

but can also include direct intentions to effect change or influence these developments through the act of bearing witness.

David Schalk argues that this form of engagement is deeply ingrained in a European tradition of intellectual influence, with forms of direct participation in the twentieth century first – or at least most prominently – defined by the Dreyfus affair.²⁰⁰ With the personalist philosopher Emmanuel Mounier's call to action in this context, a form of engagement is defined which is not necessarily concerned with concrete success or the immediate resolution of the issue at hand, but towards the act of '*témoignage*' (bearing witness) to events as they transpired.²⁰¹ This is further elaborated on by Schalk, who observes that 'when leftist intellectuals choose to become engagé, their primary motivation is not to produce an immediately discernible historical effect',²⁰² mostly due to a general lack of clear cause and effect in public discussion, and a lack of clarity in terms of how such a success could be qualified – a concern which is also echoed in Ziemann's analysis of the concrete effects of the peace movement in relation to individual decisions and foreign and military policies, as was examined in Chapter 2.²⁰³

Therefore, while this expected role of engaged writers shares some elements and moral obligations with the moral authority role examined in Section 4.3., two important distinctions between these roles can be made. Firstly, while the expectations associated with writers as moral authorities base their engagement on the defence of particular values, bearing witness is a

²⁰⁰ David L Schalk, p. 18.

²⁰¹ Emmanuel Mounier, 'Refaire La Renaissance', *L'Esprit*, 1.1 (1932), p. 42.

²⁰² David L Schalk, p. 111.

²⁰³ Benjamin Ziemann, 'Peace Movements in Western Europe, Japan and the USA during the Cold War' (Essen: Klartext, 2008), p. 20.

primarily reactive role, with writers' engagement following and critiquing social and political developments rather than aiming to shape them directly or set an example of how they should be conducted. Secondly, while writers' ability to act as a moral authority may be based on their knowledge, expertise, and particular status, the witness role places less emphasis on the authority of the writer, and more on the ability of their acts of engagement to raise issues, and foster debates on a wider scale.

An influential factor in the development and expression of the necessity of bearing witness to events in the European context is heavily rooted in religious – particularly Christian – tradition. This is noted by Schalk in relation to the fervently Catholic Mounier and the similarly spiritually-based calls to action in his publication *Esprit* in the context of early twentieth century France,²⁰⁴ but has similarly been hugely influential in relation to debates surrounding the peace movement in West Germany towards the end of the Cold War, with proponents both of bearing witness and of active involvement including engaged writers, religious organisations, and other groups within the movement playing prominent roles. This importance of religious principles may appear to be at odds with the image of writers and other public intellectuals as secular figures, often associated with the values of reason and the pursuit of knowledge in opposition to spiritual traditions. However, the actual involvement of these figures with religious themes was far more varied, both in terms of personal convictions and involvement with organisations. This will be demonstrated in a number of the following case studies, particularly Chapter 5 concerning the involvement of engaged writers as part of wider

²⁰⁴ David L Schalk, p. 18.

protest actions, and is especially important in the context of the West German peace movement given the importance of religious convictions on the part of many writers, along with the roles played by religious figures and organisations in the mobilisation of the peace movement as a whole.

The factor of bearing witness is not, however, an exclusively religious one. As was examined in Section 4.3., Schalk's analysis also places heavy emphasis on the necessity of engaged intellectuals providing 'an ethical ingredient in political life which otherwise would be lacking'.²⁰⁵ While religious elements can provide strong moral motivations and obligations, Schalk's analysis places more emphasis on the political role of adding ethical concerns into public debate. This therefore strengthens the more general moral obligations to bring moral considerations to wider attention with the addition of a specific political obligation and associated role in public discourse.

An additional aspect of this debate concerns the potential clash of conflicting sets of obligations in relation to the act of bearing witness. While the conception of remaining objective and able to provide a detached perspective on unfolding events being the first priority of writers may appear to be a simple undertaking – simpler at least than the complications associated with direct engagement – an issue arises with regards to how it can be possible both to call attention to these events and thereby engage with them without losing this central sense of detachment. This is problematic, as Jäger's perspective on active engagement shows:

²⁰⁵ David L Schalk, pp. 111–12.

Dieser Stellung des Problems entsprechen historische Beobachtungen: Die kritischen Intellektuellen haben ihre großen Auftritte in anomischen und krisenhaften Situationen. Sie riskieren etwas, indem sie sich einmischen, und werden dadurch der Öffentlichkeit als Personen sichtbar.²⁰⁶

Jäger argues that while the act of bearing witness obliges writers to become personally involved in public debates, this involvement also influences the development of the debates, thereby rendering difficult the practice of bearing objective witness and critique. Additionally, while Schalk's model of political engagement sets out mutually supportive moral and political obligations, Jäger's observation highlights a potential conflict in the obligations of those fulfilling this role, namely between the political obligations to uphold ideals by providing an ethical component or otherwise becoming directly involved in political debates, and the more pragmatic concerns and positional obligations involved in holding this position and maintaining the critical distance required for clear analysis and critique.

Because of this, the perceived expectation for writers to bear witness to social and political developments should not be viewed as entirely unproblematic, as it gives rise to at least as many questions of personal involvement and conflicting obligations as it answers, but at the same time it should not be entirely discounted as a dead end. As my case studies in the following chapters will show, this factor and its associated obligations were particularly relevant in the context of engaged writers' involvement with the West German peace movement. Whether in terms of direct participation in

²⁰⁶ Jäger, 'Der Schriftsteller als Intellektueller: Ein Problemaufriß', p. 9.

protest actions, debates over roles and public positions, or literary engagement, the tension between writers' critical detachment and personal involvement with the issues remains an important factor, not only in the fulfilment of the role of bearing witness, but to the broader issues of writers' engagement and obligations at the centre of my analysis.

Returning to this chapter's overarching questions, what insight does the factor of bearing witness provide for engaged writers' roles and expectations? In terms of how writers' roles are defined, this model emphasises the ability of engaged writers to speak out and bring issues into the public eye, as well as sustaining critical discussions of these issues. As such, this model proposes general moral obligations for intellectuals to be concerned with these moral issues, as well as more specific political obligations to bring them into political debate. As has been shown in this chapter however, an additional set of positional obligations concerning the maintenance of this public position and other pragmatic concerns can at times be at odds with these more idealistic pressures. Finally, the theme of bearing witness is particularly relevant in the context of speaking out in the face of troubling political and social developments, and is therefore very prominent in relation to writers' engagement with the peace movement in West Germany.

4.5. Irritant function

The final model of writers' roles and obligations is the least concerned with maintaining critical distance, positing instead an irritant function supported by positional obligations to raise questions, bring troubling issues into public debate, and to oppose harmful developments in politics and society taken as an integral part of engaged writers' roles.

This can be shown in the particular context of the Federal Republic, as Parkes demonstrates with resistance to authoritarian tendencies in relation to post-war reconstruction,²⁰⁷ along with more general themes of raising uncomfortable questions in relation to political and social power. This model shares some elements with the role of bearing witness in examined in the previous section, but can be distinguished in terms of the specificity of writers' proposed roles. While the former proposes a general role and obligations to bear witness and speak out in relation to political and social developments, this model puts forward a more directly confrontational role, specifically aimed at questioning and critiquing state power.

This actively engaged position is most clearly laid out in Jean-Paul Sartre's seminal work *What is Literature*, which ascribes a parasitic role to engaged writers in relation to the social and political systems in which they work:

Thus the writer is a parasite of the governing "élite." But functionally, he moves in opposition to the interests of those who keep him alive.²⁰⁸

This therefore puts forward an inherently critical function in writers' engagement in relation to the social and political systems in which they work, and a directly confrontational relationship between engaged writers and politicians, to the extent that writers' relevance and ability to exert influence is defined by their opposition to the objects of their critique. Furthermore, this

²⁰⁷ Parkes, *Writers and Politics in Germany, 1945-2008*, p. 41.

²⁰⁸ Jean-Paul Sartre, *What is literature?* (London: Methuen, 1967), p. 60; Jean-Paul Sartre, *Qu'est-ce que la littérature?*, Collection Folio Essais, 19 (Paris: Gallimard, 2008), p. 104. "Ainsi l'écrivain est-il un parasite de « l'élite dirigeante ». Mais fonctionnellement, il va à l'encontre des intérêts de ceux qui le font vivre."

argument returns to the issue of writers' engagement through their literary works set against more direct public or political interventions, with Sartre firmly supporting the former.

In contrast to Sartre's arguments for critique through purely literary engagement, an additional aspect of engaged writers' corrective role can be found in the importance of accompanying written works with direct acts of speaking out in the public sphere. This is encapsulated in Martin Niemöller's renowned poem *Als die Nazis die Kommunisten holten...* which admonishes the lack of such action during the Nazi dictatorship and serves as a stark reminder of the consequences to which this course could lead.²⁰⁹ This position and its associated obligations carries particular weight in the context of post-war West Germany because of the perception that failures to speak out and resist the Nazi dictatorship had effectively allowed it to establish itself and commit its atrocities, which therefore established pressing moral obligations not to allow such horrors to be repeated.

The importance of not remaining silent in the face of worrying developments is however not limited to the context of the Federal Republic. In the face of such dire consequences of abstention and silence, the necessity of speaking out to challenge problematic developments is put forward as a general moral obligation reinforced with a pressing personal dimension. The personal implication of Niemöller's perspective is that a failure to speak out could not only lead to the unchecked development of fascism or other destructive forces, but also that a personal failure to fulfil this obligation could

²⁰⁹ Martin Niemöller, 'Als Die Nazis Die Kommunisten Holten...' (Martin Niemöller Stiftung) <<http://www.martin-niemoeller-stiftung.de/4/daszitat/a31>> [accessed 4 February 2013].

lead to being personally affected by these developments. Furthermore, while this general moral obligation and its associated personal implications are shared by all citizens, this role is given particular importance in the case of writers, who are faced with a specific positional obligation to speak out and resist based on their ability to have their voices heard due to their public position.

The irritant function of writers and their work is further supported in more general terms by other analyses such as Schumpeter's observation that an engaged intellectual's 'main chance of asserting himself lies in his actual or potential nuisance value',²¹⁰ and amounts to an inversion of the stabilising influence put forward in relation to writers viewed as moral authorities, but nonetheless supported by both general moral obligations and more specific positional obligations based on writers' expertise and public positions.

The extent to which this position should be seen as an inherent positional obligation in the public roles of writers and conversely how much room for interpretation and choice in taking on these critical positions forms a central part of the discussions in my case studies, particularly Chapter 6's analysis of writers' conferences. For the purposes of this theoretical overview at least, it is sufficient to note that this critical position and supporting positional obligations are associated with the public roles of engaged writers, while the application and priority of these factors are subject to further debate.

Another perspective on this issue of a special capacity of writers and intellectuals in general for acting as an irritant in political affairs can be found

²¹⁰ Schumpeter, p. 147.

in the parallel drawn by Ralf Dahrendorf between modern intellectuals and medieval court jesters:

As the court jesters of modern society, all intellectuals have the duty to doubt everything that is obvious, to make relative all authority, to ask all those questions that no one else dares to ask.²¹¹

Dahrendorf goes on to argue that this critical role is supported by a unique societal position:

The power of the fool lies in his freedom with respect to the hierarchy of the social order, that is, he speaks from outside as well as from inside it. The fool belongs to the social order and yet does not commit himself to it; he can without fear even speak uncomfortable truths about it.²¹²

This conception of writers' roles and expectations therefore outlines a special position outside of normal social hierarchies, similar to Schumpeter's conception of figures such as writers lacking direct responsibility for practical affairs, examined in Section 4.1. However, unlike Schumpeter's model of detached intellectual status, the conception of writers as court jesters presents an actively engaged role which uses the outsider status of these individuals, along with supporting positional obligations to fulfil a critical, irritant function in relation to the social and political systems in which they work.

²¹¹ Ralf Dahrendorf, 'The Intellectual and Society: The Social Function of the "Fool" in the Twentieth Century', in *On Intellectuals: Theoretical Studies: Case Studies*, by Philip Rieff (New York: Doubleday, 1969), pp. 49–52 (p. 51).

²¹² *Ibid.*, p. 50.

This is further reinforced by Günter Grass, who puts forward a similar perspective on the role of engaged writers as the equivalent of court jesters as a way of overcoming the contradictions of literary and socio-political issues:

But there are also a great many writers, known and unknown, who, far from presuming to be the “conscience of the nation,” occasionally bolt from their desks and busy themselves with the trivia of democracy. Which implies a readiness to compromise. Something we must get through our heads is this: a poem knows no compromise, but men live by compromise. The individual who can stand up under this contradiction and act is a fool and will change the world.²¹³

In a similar fashion to Dahrendorf, Grass proposes a special position as a court jester, neither entirely focussed on artistic pursuits nor on direct involvement in partisan politics or as a special advisor to political figures. Instead, the possibility of acting in the capacity of a fool allows writers to become involved in social and political issues without necessarily conforming to external demands or abandoning their position as ‘eccentric individuals’.²¹⁴ This therefore ascribes a degree of protection to prominent writers, and reinforces the positional obligations of these figures not only on the basis of being able to have their uncomfortable critiques heard on a grand scale, but being able to get away with making such statements without the same fear of punishment which could befall political figures or other citizens. This particular status can be seen directly in the engagement of Jean-Paul Sartre, whose criticisms of the use of torture during the Algerian War led to the

²¹³ Günter Grass, ‘On Writers as Court Jesters’, *The American Scholar*, 38.2 (1969), pp. 275–80 (p. 280).

²¹⁴ Ibid.

possibility of being arrested for subversive activities, before this was dismissed by Charles de Gaulle's assertion that 'one does not imprison Voltaire'.²¹⁵

This does not suggest that publicly engaged writers should be immune to all consequences or critiques of their own positions or statements, but rather that their special societal position allows them some protection, and therefore carries with it an expectation to put this protection to use by bringing uncomfortable truths and questions into public debate.

While this conception of engaged writers as jesters in the context of political discourse affords advantages to their position, it also stands in opposition to the knowledge-based position of moral authority examined in Section 4.3. Although both sets of writers' roles envision a particular status for these figures which allows them to make special contributions to social and political discourses, the moral authority model presents this as an elevated status, as writers' engagement is justified and given deeper meaning on the basis of the special knowledge and representation of social values by these figures. Meanwhile, as Dahrendorf and Grass argue, the special status of writers as fools places these figures outside of social hierarchies and therefore removes the possibility of claims to authority – moral or otherwise – along with any representative capacity in order to allow engaged writers to speak freely and perform their critical societal role. Therefore, while many of the roles examined in this chapter can be undertaken simultaneously, in some cases fitting together cohesively and in others actively reinforcing one another,

²¹⁵ Jean-Noël Jeanneney, 'Demandez "La Cause Du Peuple"!', *L'Histoire*, January 2012, p. 86 (p. 86). "On n'emprisonne pas Voltaire." Translation my own.

the status of engaged writers as fools and as authorities must be seen as mutually exclusive.

This conception of writers having a necessarily oppositional role in relation to state power takes on further significance in the specific context of German politics and society, with the concept of the mutually critical and mutually exclusive pairing of the domains of *Macht* and *Geist* viewed as two separate spheres of activity. As William Niven puts forward in his analysis of German politics and culture in the twentieth century, this conception has a long history, from Jakob Burckhardt's view of separate dominions of culture, state and religion,²¹⁶ to a point of fundamental 'decoupling' between the two distinct groups of those in power and those concerned with intellectual affairs. In contrast to the decoupling leading to writers' detachment from politics examined in Section 4.1., this divided framework also allows for writers and other intellectuals to act as a critical and in some cases directly corrective force in relation to politics and society, meaning that this ostensibly detached cultural sphere held 'considerable political potential for all its dismissal of politics'.²¹⁷

This expectation to react in a corrective manner is further defined as a positional obligation associated with public intellectuals in Dietz Bering's conception of these individuals as:

[Menschen,] die kritische Distanz zu den Mächtigen in den Staatsapparaten halten, Abstand halten auch zu den erstarrten Ideologien, Menschen, die sich faschistoider Denk- und

²¹⁶ Niven and Jordan, p. 4.

²¹⁷ Ibid.

rollenspezifischer Lebensweise entziehen, um – streng an demokratischen Ideen und den Menschenrechten orientiert – in der Stunde der Gefahr ihre Stimme öffentlich zu erheben.²¹⁸

The critical distance in this conception gives further insight into the expectations of writers' roles related to this separation from state power. Not only are the realms of *Macht* and *Geist* viewed as separate, but the mechanics of this division are seen as an important factor in interactions between them by allowing, and indeed enforcing the necessary distance for critical analysis. Although the importance of critical distance is stressed here, this role should not be confused with the concept of total detachment examined in Section 4.1. While the detached roles put forward by Benda and Schumpeter conceptualise writers' distance from politics and society as an ideal which should be upheld by an abstention from public engagement, Bering's analysis views critical detachment as a factor which aids the engagement of writers by allowing them to offer meaningful contributions to public discourse. Accordingly, Bering portrays the delineation of these roles in a somewhat positive light, with the obligation to act in a corrective manner in defence of truth and values such as democratic ideas and human rights actually aided by the detachment from mainstream political discourse by allowing more objective assessments to be made, along with interventions from outside. However, these obligations are not always so complementary, as the moral and positional obligations to uphold ideals can at times come into conflict with more pragmatic concerns of individual and organisational needs. This conflict is particularly relevant in this

²¹⁸ Dietz Bering, *Die Intellektuellen: Geschichte eines Schimpfwortes* (Stuttgart: Klett-Cotta, 1978), p. 68.

project's case studies focussing on writers' conferences and organisational engagement.

Furthermore, the fact that the obligation to react to these threats is qualified as being 'in der Stunde der Gefahr' shows that this conception of the interaction between the two camps of *Geist* and *Macht* goes beyond the more passive role of guardianship of knowledge, and extends to a direct corrective force on the part of writers in relation to political developments. This expectation is further supported in other analyses of this relationship, such as Michael Kelly's estimation of intellectuals' influence on political power, describing it as 'a form of unspoken warfare'²¹⁹ in which critique is not only useful but vital to the continuation of public discourse. Furthermore, this sense of urgency is also particularly relevant to writers' engagement with the peace movement given the sense of looming danger in the discussions and argumentation strategies of the movement concerning the threat of nuclear war.

There are however a number of problems with this conception and its related expectations. The demarcation of two entirely separate groups of intellectuals and state politics in which the former must act as a critically corrective force on the discourse and actions of the latter provides an oversimplified view of the dynamics of critique and power, in which complex political and intellectual affairs are reduced to a pure matter of mutual opposition to all developments regardless of their consequences, leading to the corrective role on the part of writers fading into irrelevance.

²¹⁹ *Critique and Power: Recasting the Foucault/Habermas Debate* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1994), p. 29.

Moreover, the conception of these two inherently opposing fields also runs a further risk of detracting from the overall relevance of debate. As Hans-Magnus Enzensberger's critique of the apparent division shows, while oversimplification of particular roles may take its toll on discourse, a far greater danger lies in petty opposition for opposition's sake. This, Enzensberger argues, renders the entirety of debate between the two spheres akin to a children's game – 'ein deutsches Indianerspiel' – in which the tradition of mutually-critical spheres of expertise had by the 1980s developed to the point where no meaningful critique could be provided by either side:

“Geist und Macht” – das wird dann nur noch der Titel eines alten Western sein, der nicht mehr in der Wirklichkeit, sondern nur noch im Fernsehen stattfindet.²²⁰

While this view of the schism between *Geist* and *Macht* may be an extreme example of the dangers of viewing the state of intellectuals and politics as two simply opposing groups which is itself challenged repeatedly over the course of this project's examination of engagement in relation to the peace movement, the problem which it poses should also be borne in mind. While the perceived positional obligations for intellectuals to act in a corrective capacity as a counterpoint to purely political developments adds to the expectations associated with their activity in this context, an overreliance on the traditions of *Geist* and *Macht* as the sole explanation for this function can easily lead to oversimplification or too great a focus on opposition for its own sake.

²²⁰ Hans Magnus Enzensberger, *Mittelmass und Wahn : gesammelte Zerstreuungen* (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 1988), p. 212.

To summarise this set of roles and expectations, engaged writers are expected to use this privileged position to act as a critique of state power, not only drawing attention to particular issues, but directly resisting problematic developments where appropriate. This role has been shown to be particularly pressing in the context of post-war West Germany, but is by no means unique to this context. As for the obligations involved, this role combines general moral obligations shared with other citizens with specific positional obligations for intellectuals based on their elevated public profile and unique social position. Finally, in relation to the presence of this role in engagement with the peace movement, these obligations to resist problematic developments through meaningful critical engagement were not always undertaken effectively, clearly or with any great consensus over exactly which problematic developments should be resisted, or what forms of resistance were appropriate in relation to them. However, the general importance of an obligation on the part of writers to react to and resist such issues remains an important factor in their contributions to the protest movement.

4.6. Summary

In drawing this chapter to a close, what general points can be made on the models of writers' roles and engagement examined in this chapter, and how can these expected roles be applied to the specific cases of writers' engagement with the West German peace movement? Once again, it is useful to return to the three main questions posed at the beginning of this chapter:

- What factors define a writer's expected roles?
- What obligations are involved?

- What is the relevance of this model to the West German peace movement?

This chapter has shown that a wide range of expected roles are in evidence in relation to publicly engaged writers in the context of the Federal Republic and beyond. While these roles can be seen to be at times complementary and at others somewhat oppositional, it is evident that any conception of a single model of engaged writers' behaviour or specific role is an oversimplification of a complex issue. Indeed, even holding some or a combination of the above examined roles as a strict model encompassing all aspects of writers' social and political roles in the West German context oversimplifies the subject to an extent. Instead, a more practical approach – particularly for the purposes of this analysis – is to view these factors as general expectations established both by writers themselves and by receptions of their work and social status and associated with the roles and behaviour of engaged writers acting as a basis for engagement, rather than defining all aspects of their actions.

Furthermore, the roles of engaged writers are by no means static. As this chapter has sought to demonstrate, writers' engagement in the Federal Republic in the late 1970s and early 1980s as well as its associated expectations and perceptions was heavily influenced by the varied developments across the preceding decades, and continued to develop after the end of this period. The forms of engagement at the heart of this analysis should not be seen as a radical break from previous roles and positions, but nor should they be interpreted as being wholly representative of all forms of engagement in the context of the Federal Republic or elsewhere.

The underlying obligations involved in the roles and expectations of engaged writers examined in this chapter are similarly diverse, encompassing political, positional, and moral models, and ranging from universal obligations held by all citizens regardless of circumstances to specific writers' obligations, and even more specific instances of obligation taken on by particular writers in particular contexts. Moreover, as with the roles and expectations associated with engaged writers, these forms of obligation should not be seen as strict categories which directly define all aspects of these figures' engagement or general behaviour, but rather contribute to an underlying basis which provides motivation and justifications for engagement with political and social issues.

Finally, and with particular importance for the following case studies, all of the roles and obligations examined in this chapter are relevant in at least one form or another to the varied forms of writers' engagement with the peace movement analysed in this project. Whether in terms of the active participation in protest actions, internal conference discussions, organisational engagement, or engagement through written works, the factors associated with writers' expected roles and positions retain their relevance. This can at times be seen with the overriding importance of a single set of expected roles, with multiple complementary roles, and even at times with conflicting roles and obligations forming a vital part of discussion. As for the specifics of how these roles affect the instances of engagement themselves, this analysis is best left to my case study chapters.

5. One voice in the protesting fugue: Engaged writers and mass protest actions 1981-1983

The first instance of writers' engagement which combines the roles and obligations laid out in the previous chapters with specific forms of engagement with the peace movement concerns the direct contributions of prominent writers at two critical points in the movement's most active period, beginning in 1981, and again at its apex in 1983.

The first of these protest actions took place on 10 October 1981 in Bonn, and was supported by the mass mobilisation of protesters across a broad support basis, which brought together approximately 300,000 protesters to take part in the demonstration. With this huge display of support from a wide variety of contributors, the demonstration marked the transition of the peace movement from its rhetorically-focussed appeals phase to the more active action phase, and with it represented a 'Durchbruch in der Öffentlichkeit',²²¹ heralding the arrival of the peace movement into mainstream West German political and social discourses in this period. The collected volume of speeches and contributions to the Bonn protest edited by Volkmar Deile et al.²²² will be used as the leading primary source for the following analysis, along with contemporary media coverage of the protest and its consequences.

Following the insights into the contributions, roles, and obligations of engaged writers at the beginning of the peace movement's action phase, an

²²¹ Leif, p. 2.

²²² Volkmar Deile, Friedensdemonstration für Abrüstung und Entspannung in Europa und Friedensdienste e.V Aktion Sühnezeichen, *Bonn 10.10.1981: Reden, Fotos* (Bornheim: Lamuv, 1981).

additional perspective on these elements can be found in their application to the larger series of protests in 1983 which marked the highpoint of peace movement's protest activities. This 'Aktionswoche', which took place in October 1983, saw the mobilisation of over a million protesters in a series of protest activities across the Federal Republic, including a number of prominent writers, in some cases taking on similar positions to the earlier Bonn demonstration, and in others adapting to the changing conditions with correspondingly changing contributions.

This chapter presents a comparison of constants and variables between the two peaks of mass protests, with a particular focus on the contributions of engaged writers, the roles and obligations involved in supporting and justifying these actions, and their place alongside other elements of the peace movement.

5.1. Bonn as a turning point

The Bonn demonstration was not only a significant example of mass support for the peace movement, but also a highly symbolic turning point which contributed significantly to a shift in the nature of the movement itself, as well as the role of writers within it. The first element which defined both the Bonn demonstration and the period of high activity from the peace movement which followed it is the factor of mass mobilisation.

5.1.1. Mobilisation

As was shown in Chapter 2, the phasic development of the peace movement was marked by a series of important watershed moments, with the mass mobilisation of support for the 1981 Bonn protest standing as a particularly striking point of transition into the peace movement's most active phase in this

period.²²³ This mass mobilisation of support was at times controversial, as fears of demagoguery and threats to the democratic foundations of the Federal Republic were expressed by the Schmidt administration and in public discussion surrounding the demonstration:

Bundeskanzler Schmidt hat an die demokratisch gesinnten Teilnehmer der heutigen Bonner „Friedensdemonstration“ appelliert, sich nicht von Kommunisten und Chaoten mißbrauchen zu lassen.²²⁴

However, an equally important emphasis was also placed on the democracy-affirming aspect of the Bonn demonstration, with the participation of such a wide range of protesters and the goal of political influence through peaceful protest presented in a largely positive light in articles such as Theo Sommer's front page report for *die Zeit*:

Wir haben die Kampagne gegen den Atomtod erlebt, die Bewegung gegen die Notstandsgesetze und die Anti-Vietnam-Demonstrationen – unsere Demokratie hat sie alle überlebt. [...] Massendemonstrationen, hat ein Psychologe jüngst gesagt, sind wie Bestseller: Sie finden Resonanz, weil sie zum Ausdruck bringen, was die Menschen bewegt. Die friedliche Demonstration ist ein Leberelement der Demokratie, ein Zeichen ihrer Stärke und Lebendigkeit.²²⁵

Accordingly, the unprecedented level of mobilisation for this direct protest action not only characterised the 1981 Bonn demonstration as the first

²²³ Deile, p. 44.

²²⁴ Manfred Schnell, 'Der Kanzler mahnt alle "Ehrlichen": Laßt euch nicht mißbrauchen', *Die Welt*, 10 October 1981, pp. 1, 4 (p. 1).

²²⁵ Theo Sommer, 'Demonstrationen und Demokratie', *Die Zeit*, 9 October 1981, 42 edn, p. 1.

clear example of this new phase of the peace movement's activities, but also clearly showed the ability of mass protests to draw on and generate additional streams of mobilisation from across varied ideologies and social strata with the goal of political influence within a democratic framework. This concept is acknowledged in Robert Jungk's contribution to the proceedings:

Großdemonstrationen wie diese sind Mahnzeichen, sind Versuche der Bürger, die sonst von den Mächtigen nicht mehr gehört und gesehen werden, sich kräftig bemerkbar zu machen.²²⁶

This visible shift in emphasis away from abstract argumentation to a more direct form of exerting influence through protests supported by grassroots mobilisation could be seen as a diminishment of the role of writers within the peace movement, or even as a challenge of their expertise and ability to contribute meaningfully to it. However, Jungk's very next lines show a still-pressing reason to maintain such a role:

Aber wichtiger noch ist die tägliche Kleinarbeit der Friedensbewegung im Alltag. Bitte redet nicht nur mit denen, die schon überzeugt sind, sondern wagt es alle jene anzusprechen, die noch zögern, die gar nicht oder falsch informiert sind. Es kündigt sich eine große Wende an, ein anderes Verhältnis von Mensch zu Mensch, von Mensch zu Natur. Und Ihr seid dabeigewesen als es begann.²²⁷

Thus, by reaffirming the role of argumentation and persuasion in the peace movement as well as the obligations on the part of all participants to remain engaged in these ways alongside the more dramatic displays of the

²²⁶ Deile, p. 139.

²²⁷ Deile, p. 139.

action phase, Jungk's appeal supports the role of politically engaged individuals such as writers in a complementary rather than oppositional relationship with the increasingly important factor of public demonstrations. Moreover, the stressing of the point that 'Ihr seid dabeigewesen als es begann' adds another layer of meaning to this appeal to individual commitments. Jungk frames his own engagement not as a special figure distinct from the mundane acts of the masses, but instead as the actions of an empowered individual using methods potentially within the reach of any other participant in the demonstration. This diminishment of barriers between speaker and audience therefore reinforces the importance of the persuasive role put forward as the 'tägliche Kleinarbeit der Friedensbewegung', and with it represents a rejection of the detached roles of writers in favour of a direct form of engagement with the themes of the peace movement alongside the other assembled protesters. While Jungk's primary role is based on argumentation, it is by no means claimed as an exclusive trait of politically engaged writers. In fact, this appeal not only states that such a role could be taken up by any individual participating in the peace movement, but positively encourages this form of engagement. Accordingly, Jungk presents his own role – and by extension the roles of other similarly committed writers – as the simple function of being in the right position and acknowledged as having the necessary expertise to speak on a particular issue, thereby acknowledging a specific positional obligation for writers to use their status and expertise to these ends, but at the same time not limiting this role to writers alone.

This contributing role of engaged writers was particularly important in the Bonn demonstration, given the diverse groups involved in its organisation,

and the equally diverse array of prominent speakers who made their contributions to the day's proceedings alongside the engaged writers such as Robert Jungk and Heinrich Böll. These included a wide array of prominent individuals taking on a range of particular positions, including political representatives such as Erhard Eppler and Petra Kelly, religious figures such as Dorothee Sölle, Uta Ranke-Heinemann, and Martin Niemöller, and representatives of specific areas such as the military experts including Alfred Mechttersheimer and Gert Bastian, and representatives of protest movements beyond West Germany, including Coretta King and Greetje Witte-Rang.

Although each of these figures undertook generally similar roles as prominent speakers and figureheads alongside the engaged writers at the demonstration, the specific positions and underlying obligations supporting their roles differed greatly. For the political speakers, a particular role was in evidence in representing specific political parties and supporting the principles shared by these organisations and the peace movement, such as the SPD in Eppler's involvement and the Greens for Kelly. While this did not mean that the parties themselves had a defining influence on the development of the wider peace movement, or even necessarily that the parties themselves supported the demonstration, as with Eppler's protesting position which was at odds with that of the party leadership, the significance of these figures' contributions was largely based on their position as politicians and the representative capacity of their party membership. A similar function can be identified for the religious speakers, in a more general sense. Instead of representing specific parties and political viewpoints, the roles of speakers such as Sölle, Ranke-Heinemann, and Niemöller were defined largely by their

status as Christian theologians, representing both the principles and the followers of the religion, and their engagement with moral issues within a religious framework. In contrast to this faith-based moral authority, the military experts speaking at the Bonn demonstration based their roles on a much more specific area of expertise, focussing on providing informed analysis and critique of the military policies of the Federal Republic based on their specific knowledge as former Bundeswehr officers, augmented in Mechttersheimer's case by an additional claim to expertise as an academic in the field of peace studies. A similarly specific symbolic role was also taken on with the statements of international solidarity by the representatives of specific organisations and movements in the USA and the Netherlands by King and Witte-Rang respectively.

In contrast to these particular roles, the roles of engaged writers in the Bonn demonstration were much more loosely defined. While a degree of expertise was involved in the fulfilment and justification of their positions, it was defined as a non-specific expertise in the use of language, rather than in any particular area. While representative and moral roles were put forward in relation to writers' roles, these functions were not associated with particular parties, organisations, or religious frameworks. Despite these looser definitions, the contributions made to the 1981 Bonn demonstration by engaged writers were nonetheless influenced by a variety of roles and obligations linked to their positions as writers, their relations to the peace movement, and the wider issues of war and peace.

5.1.2. Writers' engagement

As with the internal development of the peace movement, there is the possibility of seeing the shift to broad-spectrum mobilisation for protest action as a diminishing factor for the influence of politically engaged individuals, whose specific knowledge and expertise could have been lost in the sheer volume of other protesters, in spite of the aforementioned broader calls to action such as Jungk's 'tägliche Kleinarbeit der Friedensbewegung'.

However, the position of writers in the Bonn demonstration challenges these perceptions. Instead of rendering these figures obsolete, the growing importance of mass mobilisation in the peace movement altered the function of writers' actions and interpretations of their obligations, transitioning from a primarily argumentative engagement to become more focused on acting as rallying points in order to attract more support for the cause. This can be seen in Böll's call to further engagement:

Unsere Bundesregierung kann es anders haben, sie kann ein gelähmtes, apathisches Wählervolk haben, das die Vergangenheit vergessen hat, an die Zukunft nicht denkt, nur von einem Frühstück zum nächsten – willenlos, gehorsam, geduckt dieser Waffenpest entgegensieht – sie kann ein bequemes Wählervolk haben – ich glaube, ein unbequemes sollte ihr lieber sein.²²⁸

Thus, while the specific roles of writers in this form of protest were indeed influenced by the shift towards mass mobilisation, they were by no means rendered obsolete, but rather experienced a renewed emphasis on the

²²⁸ Deile, pp. 157–58.

obligations to use their public positions and recognition to serve as rallying calls for further engagement and mobilisation, as well as contributing to the peace movement in their own right. This direct involvement in support of the protest actions therefore presents a unique perspective on the question of detachment as an expected role of writers, as examined in the previous chapter. While the positions put forward by figures such as Böll in this context retained a degree of critical judgement, the general principle of necessary abstention from social and political issues in order to preserve the status and higher calling of writers was effectively rejected by their direct involvement with the peace movement and its protest actions. In an even more direct fashion than engaging with issues through their written work, the physical presence of writers supporting the peace movement shows a clear rejection of the detached role and its associated obligations, in favour of a direct fulfilment of the more critical roles such as acting as a moral authority and bearing witness to troubling events, all as a relatively small part of a larger protest movement.

The organisational structure of the Bonn demonstration also emphasises this contributory position of engaged writers, with the individuals themselves and their audience representing only a small part of a much larger whole. However, this should not be seen as having a negative impact on the influence of these figures in the movement, or the relevance of the obligations which supported their positions. Instead, their one role among many others working within a structure of mass mobilisation towards a common end has the effect of strengthening the resolve and perceived obligations of all involved.

While the push towards mass mobilisation and active, public forms of protest necessitated a reinforcement of the position of engaged writers as one

group among many, so too did the importance of war and peace develop into one pressing issue among others, with frequent and often inseparable connections to these other debates. While the obligations to address these issues remained clear in the argumentation used at this time, and were intensified by developments in the wider relations of the Cold War, it was evident in the Bonn demonstration from Robert Jungk's simultaneous engagement with the peace movement and representation of the environmental movement²²⁹ to Heinrich Böll's calls for engagement on multiple levels, from protests in the street to more direct pressure by the people on their elected officials²³⁰ that the concept of a singular obligation to engagement with singular issues was something of an oversimplification. While the 1981 Bonn demonstration was not necessarily the first manifestation of this aspect of writers' engagement, it was certainly a very visible implementation of them, and set a precedent which would continue for the remainder of the intense period of peace movement action in the 1980s.

5.2. The 1983 climax

The nature of high-profile mass demonstrations as turning points for the peace movement was however not limited to the 1981 Bonn demonstration. Two years after its breakthrough at the beginning of the action phase, an even larger mobilisation of support for protest actions across the Federal Republic proved to be the apex of the peace movement's activity and influence during this phase, culminating in the 'Aktionswoche' in October 1983. As with the 1981 demonstration, the 1983 protests had a diverse variety of organisers, and were

²²⁹ Deile, p. 137.

²³⁰ Ibid., p. 158.

supported by an equally diverse mass mobilisation of groups and individuals, in which engaged writers played a contributory role alongside many others. Unlike the 1981 demonstration however, many of the 1983 protests were somewhat more specialised events, both in terms of their local and regional support structures, and in the focus of their protest activities. This allowed for a more direct use of the particular roles and status of engaged writers and other contributors in events such as the ‘Prominentenblockade’ at Mutlangen, but also marked an increasing sense of diversification and fragmentation within the wider peace movement.

As Chapter 2 detailed, the peace movement faced a difficult situation after its 1983 peak, with waning influence and mobilisation potential accompanying risks of fragmentation and radicalisation from within. However, these problems did not develop purely in this period of decline, and were evident even as the activity in the action phase reached its apex in the 1983 ‘Aktionswoche’. To an even greater extent than in the 1981 Bonn demonstration, divisions between factions in the peace movement came to the fore, most notably between political groups in the Bonn Hofgarten protest, in which the involvement of Willy Brandt was sharply criticised by representatives of the Greens such as Petra Kelly, who were in turn criticised by other participants including the chairman of the Jungsozialisten Rudolf Hartung for using the protest as a ‘Trampolin für Parteiengezänk’.²³¹ Thus, as in other disputes between factions, the factor of conflicting positional obligations played a central role. Brandt’s support of West Germany’s continued role in NATO along with other commitments made during his and

²³¹ Von unserer Bonner Redaktion, p. 1.

Schmidt's chancellorships contrasted with his opposition to the Pershing II stationing. This was denounced as absurd by these critics,²³² while the conflict between peace movement solidarity and party loyalty was also hotly debated. Even before the 'Aktionswoche' protests actually took place, these discordant positions and perspectives on where to take the peace movement were apparent in public discussion, with the fallout from the Mutlangen 'Prominentenblockade' revealing an important question concerning the attitude of the movement shared by prominent engaged writers and other protesters alike: 'Was kann die nächste Eskalationsstufe sein?'²³³ This question only became more pressing following the peak of protest action, as further escalation in terms of mobilisation and direct protest threatened to fundamentally change the nature of the movement, as Wilfried Hertz-Eichenrode identified:

Die eigene Dynamik treibt den Protest in zunehmend schärfere Aktionen hinein. Die am Samstag erfreulicherweise weithin friedlichen Demonstrationen drohen unfriedlicher zu werden.²³⁴

Thus, in spite of the success of the 1983 'Aktionswoche' as a series of peaceful protest actions supported by an unprecedented level of mass mobilisation, it also represented the final turning point of the action phase, marking a transition to a far less intensive period for both the peace movement as a whole and the roles of engaged writers within it.

²³² Gunter Hofmann, 'Einer Vom Stamme Zweifel', *Die Zeit*, 28 October 1983, 44 edn, p. 4.

²³³ Schwelien Michael, 'Leiden um jeden Preis', *Die Zeit*, 9 September 1983, 37 edn, section Politik, p. 5.

²³⁴ Wilfried Hertz-Eichenrode, 'Die Ebbe und die Flut-Macher', *Die Welt*, 24 October 1983, 248 edn, p. 2.

5.3. Justifications

As a result of the broad support basis of the 1981 and 1983 protests, along with the diverse contributions made by engaged writers alongside others, the questions of how the positions taken on by writers were defined and justified is particularly important for examining their role in the protest actions. Additionally, but no less importantly, the question of what distinguished writers' contributions from those of other protesters must also be considered, given that a number of the roles and obligations involved in defining and justifying this engagement were based on the specific status and expertise of writers. The writers involved in these protest actions can be seen to be particularly suited to the particular forms of engagement which they undertook, or at least were in a position to make their specific contributions in more effective ways based on their expertise, roles, and obligations.

These contributions were frequently supported by the roles and obligations of writers examined in the previous chapters. Although not every form of obligation or prescribed role of writers examined in the previous chapters can be applied to the context of these protest actions, the framework they provide allows for a more thorough analysis of writers' contributions and positions in relation to the larger peace movement within these protest actions.

5.3.1. Representation

The first area in which the roles and obligations of engaged writers factor into their contributions to the 1981 and 1983 protest actions lies in the factor of representation. The ability of writers to represent others as part of these demonstrations was key to both these figures' own definition of their

involvement, and in others' perceptions of their roles, and was frequently influenced by the expectations of engaged writers to use their expertise and status to speak on behalf of others and to act as a moral authority, based on general moral obligations shared with other protesters, and more specific positional obligations supporting their particular position as writers.

It would be all too easy to characterise the representative positions taken on by writers across the 1981 and 1983 protests as a simple case of a few prominent individuals directly representing the otherwise unrepresented masses, and to view all forms of representation relating to these contributions as the fulfilment of this single expected role and its associated obligations. However, the actual positions taken on by these figures proved to be somewhat more complex, both in terms of the relations between writers and others involved in the protests, and the roles and obligations involved in supporting these forms of engagement.

The most immediately striking difference between writers and the majority of other participants in the demonstration is a simple question of age. This was demonstrated particularly clearly in the speeches made at the 1981 Bonn demonstration. While the demographic diversity of this demonstration has been noted as one of its great strengths in Deile's evaluation²³⁵ and in press coverage of the event,²³⁶ it also served to starkly highlight a generational gap between the 'mehr als ein Viertelmillion meist jungen Menschen' in the streets of the West German capital and 'die Großväter' on the podium before them.²³⁷

²³⁵ Deile, p. 20.

²³⁶ Ibid., p. 165.

²³⁷ "'Deutsche Patrioten" und die Friedfertigkeit in Bonn', *Frankfurter Rundschau*, 12.10.1981; Deile, pp. 165-66.

As such, it may appear that the figures of Robert Jungk (68) or Heinrich Böll (63) were too detached in terms of both experience and perceptions of them to adequately represent the on average much younger body of protesters. However, on closer inspection of these figures' contributions to the day's proceedings, it is evident that this difference merely served to alter and in some cases augment their representative capability within the wider context of the peace movement.

This is evident in the representative role taken on by Robert Jungk, whose main contribution to the proceedings was heavily influenced by his role in representing the cause of environmentalism:

Die Umweltbewegung, für die ich hier spreche, kämpft für einen Friedensschluß der Menschen mit der Natur, für ein Ende der Ausbeutung und Vernichtung des einzigartigen Planeten Erde, mit dem Ziel der Machtvergrößerung und Bereicherung kleiner egoistischer Eliten in West und Ost, in Nord und Süd.²³⁸

Thus, parallel to the roles expressed by spokespeople from specific organisations and parties, Jungk's statement of purpose and subsequent detailing of his engagement with both the environmental and peace movements clearly demonstrate his multiple positional obligations. Furthermore, Jungk's prominent status as an accomplished author and supporter of both the environmental and peace movements helps draw further attention to the broad basis of support in the Bonn demonstration and beyond, by intertwining the goals, motivations, and arguments used in the groups represented.

²³⁸ Deile, p. 137.

Additionally, by drawing on the theme of common threat, Jungk reinforces his role in speaking on behalf of others with additional roles acting as a moral authority, and bearing witness to troubling developments, adding both moral obligations concerning the future of the planet and humanity's existence on it, and more specific positional obligations to use his position as a prominent, engaged writer to draw attention to these issues on a larger scale. Although these three roles and their associated obligations could appear to add to the fragmentation of the protest's message, their simultaneous application in Jungk's contribution allows these roles to provide mutual support for each other, and thereby act cohesively in support of his position.

Just as the representative role on behalf of groups contributing to the peace movement was enhanced by the perceived expertise on the part of the speakers, so too was this expertise used to its fullest effect in these writers' involvement with the direction of the peace movement. While the status of older, distinguished writers differed significantly from that of the majority of the younger protesters in Bonn, the involvement of these figures served as a beacon encouraging others who may not have considered siding with these elements of the peace movement to reconsider the issues at hand in light of his more reputable form of commitment. This can be seen particularly clearly in Heinrich Böll's closing statements to the assembled crowd:

Es ist kalt geworden, Sie haben alle lange gewartet. Ich möchte Ihnen im Namen auch der Vorredner, danken für Ihre Geduld, Ihnen allen danken für die Ermutigung, die Sie darstellen! Die Politiker haben ja die Wahl, uns zu apathischen Zynikern zu machen. Das ist sehr leicht geschehen. Sie können es haben, sie können eine gelähmte

Bevölkerung auf der ganzen Welt haben, die gelähmt ist von diesen Waffenpesten und Waffenzahlen. Wir wollen uns nicht lähmen!²³⁹

With these declarations, Böll makes three important points relating to his status and the more general status of engaged writers in the peace movement. The first of these is the overall tone of Böll's address. While still following a similar call to action to other contributors, Böll's thanking of the protestors for their patience and acknowledgement of their efforts in coming out into the cold for the sake of the protest message demonstrates and reinforces an air of dignity and legitimacy, which coupled with his own esteemed status as a distinguished writer and representative of the peace movement in this instance, serve to emphasise the contrast between the orderly nature of the peaceful protest and the 'Chaos, Zerstörung und Gewalt' warned about prior to the event.²⁴⁰ This formulation also serves to highlight the contributions and efforts made by every participant in the demonstration alongside his own, given that the concerns of the weather and time applied to those on the podium and in the street in equal measure.

Secondly, Böll's appeal to a common cause – with himself included in the declaration that 'wir wollen uns nicht lähmen!' – combines the concept of his solidarity with the assembled protestors with the fulfilment of a specific role of engaged writers to bear witness to troubling developments. While the act of bearing witness to problems may generally be applied to all contributions to these protest actions, the specific acknowledgement of the importance of speaking out, along with the use of Böll's prominent status to

²³⁹ Deile, p. 160.

²⁴⁰ "‘Deutsche Patrioten’ und die Friedfertigkeit in Bonn' *Frankfurter Rundschau*, 12.10.1981; Deile, pp. 165-66.

encourage others to do so draws on specific positional obligations on the part of engaged writers to use their expertise and status towards this goal.

This contribution provides a further contrast with engagement along political lines elsewhere in the movement. While many of the protesters in Bonn were motivated by commitment to protest organisations, political parties or certain ideological convictions, as can be seen in the lists of participating organisations, Böll's appeal is framed in very different terms, transcending these divisions between constituent groups in the movement in order to present a call to action facing entirely different lines of division between 'die Politiker' and a united group of engaged citizens. Instead of presenting a rival political agenda, Böll's contribution can be seen as the fulfilment of an engaged writer's role as an irritant in relation to state authority, not only challenging the federal government over its defence policies, but encouraging others to do the same, with particularly pressing positional obligations supporting Böll's use of his prominent status to further this message.

Moreover, Böll's message divorced from ideological concerns and party politics provided a mobilising effect, as the esteemed figure of the engaged writer allowed for a further broadening of the movement's support basis, including appeals to participants who may have otherwise shied away from engagement in the peace movement when presented alongside ideological discourse and membership of political parties or protest groups.

This dividing line between professional politicians and their electors also draws attention to a perceived divide between the people and the politicians chosen to represent them, the nature of their representative

relationship is called into question in relation to the contested issues of security policies and nuclear arms. In suggesting that the distinct, isolated group of politicians may not have been fulfilling its representative political obligations, an emphasis is placed on the population's own political obligations within the democratic process.

The questioning of governmental intentions and representative capability such as Böll's accusation of politicians desiring a population of 'apathischen Zynikern' may have appeared antagonistic to the point of being counterproductive, or simply dismissed as hyperbolic rhetoric if it had stemmed from political groups with agendas opposing the Schmidt administration. However, when it is expressed by a respected figure such as the 'Gewissen der Nation',²⁴¹ and particularly when fulfilling the specific function of critically engaged writers acting as an irritant towards political power, this critique is lent a further degree of legitimacy.

In addition to the cohesive role, the contributions of Jungk and Böll further drew the focus of the demonstration away from the single-issue protests of previous campaigns and can therefore be seen as a key example of Wirsching's 'Spektren der Friedensbewegung' rallying to the issue of nuclear armament while retaining their own identities and approaches.²⁴² These representative roles in the Bonn demonstration can therefore also be seen as an implementation of writers' status and expertise as a bridge between potentially clashing positional obligations for the purpose of a call for solidarity and cohesion.

²⁴¹ 'Schriftsteller Böll: Brot und Boden'.

²⁴² Andreas Wirsching, *Abschied vom Provisorium, 1982-1990* (Munich: Deutsche Verlags-Anstalt, 2006), p. 86.

This cohesive representative function retained its relevance throughout the action phase of the peace movement to its apex in 1983. Along with the highpoint of mobilisation and support for protest actions, this final stage of the action phase also saw one of the most striking examples of writers' representation in the form of the 'Prominentenblockade' of a US military base for Pershing II missiles in Mutlangen from 1 to 3 September 1983.²⁴³ Unlike the spokespeople role which had come to the fore in previous protest actions, the function of the prominent individuals in this demonstration focussed more heavily on visibility and representation of the peace movement in the public sphere than on their representation of the peace movement's arguments and concerns. This was particularly evident as the assembled protesters divided themselves into a number of smaller groups, each of which 'adopted' a prominent figure in order to support their protest.²⁴⁴

The fact that these figures did not take as active a role in the protest action at Mutlangen as in other demonstrations in this period does not however mean that their representative capacity was entirely absent. Although it was arguably unfair for similar protest actions to receive unequal treatment as a result of their public image, the fact remains that in the 'Prominentenblockade', just as in the later 1983 protests and earlier Bonn demonstration, the presence of public figures including prominent writers had its influence on both visibility and influence. Thus, whether as spokespeople or as figureheads, the representative role of these figures cannot be ignored.

²⁴³ Michael Schmid, 'Vor 25 Jahren: "Prominentenblockade" am Pershing-Depot in Mutlangen', *Lebenshaus Schwäbische Alb*, 08 2008, p. 25 <<http://www.lebenshaus-alb.de/magazin/005236.html>> [accessed 14 November 2012].

²⁴⁴ Michael Schwelien, 'Auf zur Blockade', *Die Zeit*, 2 September 1983, 36 edn, section Dossier, pp. 9–11 (p. 9).

While this cohesive effect of the interplay of positional obligations and writers' actions in the 1981 Bonn demonstration may be interpreted as a happy coincidence of positioning and timing, a more strategic aspect of these figures' involvement in the demonstration cannot be ignored. In relation to this question of strategy, a useful definition is provided by Thomas Leif's analysis of the peace movement's development in this period:

Strategie-Findung und Festlegung bzw. die Entwicklung zweckorientierter, umfassender theoretischer Konzepte im Hinblick auf Aktionen sei verstanden als planvolles, kontrolliertes Handeln und Nicht-Handeln auf der Grundlage der gesetzten Ziele und unter Einbeziehung der allgemeinen Strukturbedingungen, der unterschiedlichen Interessenlage der im Bündnis beteiligten Spektren, ihren Erfahrungswerten und einer gemeinsamen erarbeiteten Standortbestimmung.²⁴⁵

From this, the representative functions of these engaged writers in protest actions in this period stand out as vital contributions to the protest movement, catering to a wide variety of the diverse interests and spectra without diverting the focus of the movement as a whole or presenting inconsistent lines of argumentation from a singular platform. However, the factor of 'Erfahrungswerten' also hints at a further strategic value of these writers' engagements more closely tied to the expectations associated with their status and presence.

²⁴⁵ Leif, p. 152.

An indication of the importance of attendance and public support by prominent writers such as Böll and Grass in the Mutlangen blockade can be found in a parallel to the similar position of Willy Brandt in the later Bonn demonstration, as was argued in a *Zeit* editorial:

Denn wenn Namenlose auftreten, kann Washington behaupten, dort drüben sei ja eine kleine radikale Minderheit am Werk: “Mit Brandt geht das nicht so einfach.”²⁴⁶

Although clearly defined as a politician rather than an engaged writer, a similar effect can be seen with Brandt as with prominent writers, in that the presence of such a prominent figure served to both focus attention on the protest, and ensure that it could take place without being dismissed as unimportant or easily dispersed in the name of security. This symbolic function was even more relevant at Mutlangen. This protest action was not the first or the last blockade organised by the peace movement, nor was it the best attended or most ambitious project undertaken. Unlike some other demonstrations however, this blockade reached the front pages of national newspapers and fostered considerable further discussions of the themes of armament and Pershing stationing. While some of this influence was linked to the imminence of the stationing in 1983, the most important factor behind the visibility and public awareness of the ‘Prominentenblockade’ was the prominent figures themselves. Just as in the case of Brandt’s attendance of the Bonn protest, the fact that well-known, respected public figures were seen protesting alongside other citizens helped ensure that the protest could not be

²⁴⁶ Hans Ginsburg and others, ‘Wird der Herbst kühl und naß?’, *Die Zeit*, 31 October 1983, 43 edn, p. 4.

ignored. Thus, as with the selection of prominent speakers in the 1981 Bonn demonstration, the impact of these figures' presence was carefully considered during the organisation of the event:

Die Blockierer wollen auch ganz bewußt den Staat in die Zwickmühle bringen. Räumen: Das heißt unweigerlich, unschöne Bilder von weggeschleppten, womöglich zusammengeknüppelten Nobelpreisträgern auf sämtlichen Fernsehkanälen der Welt in Kauf zu nehmen.²⁴⁷

The fact that the 'Prominentenblockade' included Nobel laureates such as Böll was a further continuation of this theme of public representation. The participation of these internationally renowned figures in the often arduous practice of protest ensured that these efforts would be seen by a national as well as international audience. Additionally, their presence also meant that police actions to control the demonstration or disperse it were more carefully considered, or avoided entirely. This was evident in the different treatment experienced by a similar protest action which lacked the protection of prominent supporters:

Am letzten Wochenende fand der Zufall einen Ausweg. Noch bevor die Entscheidung über eine Fortsetzung der Blockade von Mutlangen getroffen wurde, trudelten Nachrichten aus Bitburg ein. Dort, wo keine Prominenz zu sehen war, hatte die Polizei, obwohl die Blockierer an beiden Orten ein und dasselbe taten, geräumt.²⁴⁸

²⁴⁷ Schwelien, p. 9.

²⁴⁸ Michael, p. 5.

This therefore highlights two final points on the representative function of prominent engaged writers in the 1983 'Aktionswoche' protests. Firstly, the symbolic status of these individuals afforded a degree of protection to the protest actions in which they participated, and this effect was intentionally used by the organisers of events such as the 'Prominentenblockade' for the benefit of the peace movement as a whole. Secondly, and running contrary to most other forms of writers' engagement with the peace movement in this period, this contribution was based primarily on the physical presence of prominent writers and the status associated with them, rather than their arguments, or indeed any active use of the spoken or written word on their part. As such, this form of representation was not based on the roles of engaged writers speaking on behalf of others, acting as irritants, or bearing witness to events in any active forms, and instead drew largely on the role of writers as moral authorities, specifically recognising the symbolic value of prominent, esteemed writers such as Böll and Grass, and using their physical presence to add a degree of moral justification to the protest action, as well as affording some protection to the other assembled protesters by drawing public attention to the event.

This therefore shows an even more direct implementation of writers' strategic value to the wider peace movement as outlined by Leif. Instead of drawing on the speeches and other supporting arguments of engaged writers as in other demonstrations, the presence of these figures at the 'Prominentenblockade' drew on the publicly acknowledged physical presence of the assembled writers, and presented their strategic value in a role which was effectively indistinguishable from those of other prominent figures

including politicians, religious figures, and television personalities. While the statuses of these assembled prominent individuals were based on very different frameworks and areas of expertise, the value of their presence and their strategic contributions to the blockade were effectively the same. Thus, this final form of representative authority amounted to a form of engagement which did not require a single word to be said.

5.3.2. Immediate threat

The representative roles of engaged writers were not the only way in which engaged writers contributed to either the 1981 or 1983 protests. In following with the larger themes of the demonstrations, the issue of threat was a key component in the definition and justification of writers' involvement, most pressing in terms of the immediate threat caused by the escalation of the Cold War, embodied by the NATO double-track decision and accompanying placement of intermediate range ballistic missiles on West German soil. In this instance, the questions of justification and obligation to action are presented as a direct response to a single, well-defined threat, as is shown in the opening appeal of the 1981 demonstration:

Wir fordern die Regierungen der Mitgliedländer der NATO auf, ihre Zustimmung zum Beschluß über die Stationierung neuer Mittelstreckenraketen zurückzuziehen.²⁴⁹

With this appeal, a simple function of the demonstration is laid out, with the assembly of 300,000 protesters presented as a distinct act of protest against a specific security policy, and as a direct plea to the West German

²⁴⁹ Deile, p. 25.

government and the governments of other NATO member states to withdraw their support for this policy.

In the intervening time between the 1981 Bonn demonstration and the 1983 'Aktionswoche', this immediate threat of war gained a further sense of imminence for two main reasons. Firstly, as can be seen in the assessment of the Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists' Doomsday Clock²⁵⁰ along with other analyses of the international state of affairs at this point in the Second Cold War, by late 1983 the prospect of nuclear war between the gerontocracy-led USSR and increasingly aggressive USA appeared even closer than it had in 1981. Secondly, the autumn of 1983 also saw the realisation of the NATO double-track decision which had been made in 1979 and played such a defining role in the 1981 protests. By the time of the 1983 protests, the arrival of Pershing II and Gryphon missiles for stationing in West German territory including the Mutlangen site was only weeks away. Accordingly, the threat represented by these weapon systems, as well as the armament debates throughout the preceding years were at the forefront of public discourse as well as the themes expressed in the protest actions. Because of this, the concept of a moral obligation to act in opposition to this stationing became even more pressing, as can be seen in the appeals by organising groups such as the Bonner Friedensplenum for cohesive protest, as a wide range of groups and individuals were united in their opposition to the escalation of nuclear

²⁵⁰ See Chapter 2

armament represented by the Pershing II missiles, despite the differences in perspectives and further goals which the varied participating groups held.²⁵¹

However, in spite of the increasingly pressing threat posed by the imminent missile stationing, and the mounting tensions within the peace movement and its support structures, Heinrich Böll's opening speech at the 1983 Bonn demonstration reinforced the commitments of engaged writers and other protesters alike to peaceful, orderly protest. This speech drew on the effects of the 1981 Bonn demonstration and the common cause of peace movements in West Germany and the USA to condemn the possibility of more extreme forms of protest or 'Animosität gegenüber den in der Bundesrepublik lebenden US-Soldaten', and instead urged the assembled protesters to focus on the threat of nuclear war which affected them all equally.²⁵²

Thus, the justification of the actions taken was shared between the participating writers and other elements of both the Bonn demonstration and later 'Aktionswoche' protests, with an obligation to act against an immediate, common threat. As such, the position taken on by engaged writers in relation to the immediate threat of nuclear war combined the specific role of bearing witness to troubling developments – supported by specific positional obligations on the part of engaged writers – with more general positional obligations shared by all citizens of the Federal Republic who would be

²⁵¹ Cem Akalin, 'Allein in Bonn Protestierten 500.000 Menschen Gegen Nato-Doppelbeschluss', *General-Anzeiger* (Bonn, 21 October 2013) <<http://www.general-anzeiger-bonn.de/bonn/allein-in-bonn-protestierten-500-000-menschen-gegen-nato-doppelbeschluss-article1176315.html>> [accessed 28 February 2014].

²⁵² Von unserer Bonner Redaktion, p. 1.

affected by the universal threat of nuclear war, brought into acute focus by the immediate threat of the stationing of Pershing missiles in West Germany.

This all-encompassing sense of threat also further reinforced the rejection of detachment on the part of engaged writers, in the sense that discussions of a threat as universal as nuclear war could not effectively be abstained from, and applied as much to West German writers as any other citizens of the Federal Republic. It is no surprise that a shared justification was a common theme for these shared obligations for writers and other contributors to face a shared threat, in many cases through direct involvement and support for the peace movement and its protest activities.

5.3.3. Anti-militarisation

The final line of justification is similarly grounded in the military and political threats in these late stages of the Cold War, but unlike the immediate concerns examined above, deals with the less acute but no less troubling problems posed by what was identified as an increasing militarisation of society in West Germany and beyond. While the problems posed by the double-track decision remained relevant, Böll's appeal also acknowledged that wider issues should not be ignored:

Wir demonstrieren also nicht gegen einen geplanten Krieg, sondern gegen die strategische Bereitstellung für einen möglichen Krieg, und

wenn das Wort Null-Option²⁵³ schon aus höchstem Mund fällt, dann dürfen wir wohl noch für diese Null-Option demonstrieren.²⁵⁴

This defiant statement reinforces writers' obligations to not only act due to their position in relation to a specific issue, but as contributing parts of a wider movement as well. Therefore, the roles taken on in this context built on the conception of a threat which had to be responded to by demonstrating the breadth of the issue at hand and the necessity of writers' engagement alongside similar forms of engagement on the part of political activists, religious groups, and all other elements of the wider peace movement as a result of the recognition that all of these groups and individuals were inescapably affected by the same threats.

Thus, the factor of writers' general expertise discussed in relation to their representational capabilities also plays an important role in this line of justification. This theme was also evident in the later 1983 protests, as is shown with particular clarity in a criticism made by Günter Grass:

Die Frage der Raketen ist zu wichtig, als daß sie allein einem Parlament überlassen werden könnte, das vor allem wegen seines Wirtschaftsprogramms gewählt wurde.²⁵⁵

Therefore, just as the arguments for writers' representative capacity and associated obligations focus on their perspective and ability to address certain issues, arguments were also made challenging the suitability, or to a more

²⁵³ Note: The "Null-Option" or Zero Option refers to an American proposal to remove all intermediate-range nuclear missiles from Europe by both NATO and Warsaw Pact forces.

²⁵⁴ Deile, p. 154.

²⁵⁵ Dieter Buhl, 'Herausforderung von der Straße', *Die Zeit*, 9 September 1983, 37 edn, section Politik, p. 6.

extreme extent the basic ability of political figures to address the armament question when they had been elected on the basis of their economic policy – a comment targeted at the Chancellor Kohl and the majority CDU/CSU Bundestag. However, this criticism proved to be somewhat controversial, most notably with reference to the fact that while economically minded politicians may not have possessed the relevant expertise in the field of nuclear armament and military strategy, this did not mean that prominent writers were suitable replacements. This was particularly evident in analyses such as Peter Philipps's article in *die Welt*, which argues that 'politische Emotion' on the part of some well-meaning writers had limited their perspective, and that in some cases this was a dangerous phenomenon, with the misuse of their authority lending undue legitimacy to unfounded arguments.²⁵⁶

However, while the expertise of writers such as Grass on the subject of nuclear armament may have been as limited as that of the political figures which they criticised, this specialisation in the subject is not necessary for the critical role of acting in an irritant function, as writers used their public prominence and ability to draw issues into wider public debate in order to offer a critique of government policy. In contrast to the allegations of misusing their authority in order to further their own agendas, the irritant role taken on by engaged writers such as Grass in the context of the peace movement's protest actions instead drew on positional obligations to raise difficult questions regarding the government's policies, and to bring these issues into clearer public debate. Therefore, when arguing that the armament question was too important to only be discussed in parliament, Grass was not suggesting that

²⁵⁶ Peter Philipps, 'Für Aktionen gegen Nachrüstung werden Vorlesungen gestrichen', *Die Welt*, 15 October 1983, 241 edn, p. 4.

parliamentary democracy should have been abandoned, but rather that the issue should be debated more widely. The contribution of engaged writers to the 1981 and 1983 protest actions therefore achieved the specific goal of furthering this debate, as well as the more general role of acting as an irritant by providing critique of government policy through adding their voices to the arguments, statements, and discussions at these protest actions.

In all of the writers' contributions thus far examined and in relation to both immediate and more generalised threats, this theme is central to the justification of their actions. Whether in terms of Jungk's warning of the catastrophic environmental impact of this military threat, or Böll's assessment of the political divisions between governed and governing, similar justifications are to be found: These arguments identified a clear threat, and required a broad response supported by many contributions, in which engaged writers were required to fulfil roles based on their expertise and particular positions. Thus, the roles of these figures were not sidelined by this broad basis of action, or subsumed within a generic position shared by all in equal measure, but instead relied on a combination of particular obligations to act on the basis of their own particular areas of expertise and position as prominent figures, and more general obligations shared by other protesters, all of which aimed to contribute to the wider peace movement.

Thus, whether acting as representatives, sources of legitimation and visibility, or critical voices, the roles of engaged writers in the 1981 Bonn demonstration and 1983 'Aktionswoche' protests should be seen as providing one more voice to join many others. Moreover, the peace movement in this period was based largely on similar forms of engagement from a wide variety

of groups and individuals, all of whom made their own contributions in their own ways, using the resources, abilities, and frameworks available to them.

5.4. Summary

In summary, what can be made of the roles of engaged writers in relation to the mass protest actions in the early 1980s?

The first important aspect of these demonstrations in terms of their mobilisation and realisation is that engaged writers did not play a central role. The 1981 demonstration in Bonn and the 1983 'Aktionswoche' represented two key turning points for the wider peace movement in the Federal Republic, largely due to their mass mobilisation across a broad support basis. This mobilisation was achieved through the contributions of a diverse range of groups and individuals, in which engaged writers represented one voice among many others.

Nevertheless, despite the fact that engaged writers cannot be said to have been the leading influence in the mass protest actions examined in this chapter, their roles were by no means insignificant. As this analysis has shown, engaged writers made a variety of contributions to the protest actions. From exercising their representative capabilities, to using their status as prominent individuals in order to reinforce perceptions of legitimacy in the demonstrations, to simply participating in protest actions alongside other citizens, the engaged writers involved in these events contributed meaningfully to them, and made their contributions alongside the many other groups and individuals who made up the diverse, multifaceted peace movement. These roles were at times based on the specific roles and status of engaged writers,

and at others subsumed within more general roles based on their prominent status, but in either case allowed engaged writers to contribute meaningfully to the mass mobilised protest actions in this period.

Leading on from this, the positions taken on by these engaged writers in relation to the demonstrations were defined and justified by a range of roles and expectations, including representation of both other protesters and moral principles, as well as speaking out in order to bear witness to problematic developments and to act in an irritant capacity in relation to the West German government. In fact, the only one of the five key roles of writers put forward in chapter 4 not undertaken as part of these demonstrations was the expectation of writers' detachment from social and political issues, which was effectively rejected by the very act of becoming involved in direct protest actions. This being said, the roles of writers examined in this chapter cannot simply be seen as the execution of predetermined roles which limited writers' engagement to one of a number of rigid categories. As my analysis has shown, these roles and expectations associated with engaged writers served to define and justify their engagement as part of the peace movement, and to act as a basis for the distinct contributions of these figures which were specifically adapted to the context in which they were made.

Moreover, these roles and positions taken on by engaged writers were supported by an equally wide range of political, positional, and moral obligations. These included a number of obligations shared with other participants in the demonstrations, such as the political obligations of citizens of the Federal Republic, or the even wider moral obligations shared by all people living under the threat of nuclear war. In addition, a number of specific

positional obligations of engaged writers were also in evidence, which supported the use of these figures' status and abilities in order to fulfil the roles above and more generally act as a trusted, cohesive influence on the diverse, potentially fragmented demonstrations.

This cohesive influence on the disparate groups and individuals which made up the protest actions was particularly important, both for the events and the participating writers. While the forms of writers' engagement examined in this context occurred on individual terms, the contributions, and in some cases the mere presence of these prominent figures had a cohesive effect on the other individuals and groups which made up the peace movement in this period. For a movement which contained ecological, feminist, religious, socialist, communist, and a variety of other factions, bound together by an at times strained minimal consensus, any point on which a majority of participants could agree was extremely valuable, and the ability for protesters to appreciate a speech by Heinrich Böll or demonstrate alongside Günter Grass fulfilled this role.

Thus, while engaged writers cannot be seen as the leading influence in the mass protest actions in this period, or as the main constituent of the peace movement's support basis, they played a key contributing role in the demonstrations examined in this chapter, with a range of wider roles and obligations playing an equally instrumental role in defining and justifying these positions.

6. The Council of the Wise? Writers' summits and public roles

In contrast to the very public involvement in demonstrations examined in the previous chapter, this chapter focusses on engagement within more exclusive spaces, namely a series of summits attended by writers conducted at the peak of the Second Cold War's tensions and the peace movement's most active phase. In addition to this shift of contexts from one voice among many in broadly attended mass protest actions to a more central position in intellectual-focussed surroundings, these summits also provide insight into both the agency of engaged writers and their own perspectives on their roles and obligations.

The general goal of this chapter is to provide an analysis of four writers' summits, the discussions within them, and their consequences during the period in question. These four are the 1981 Berliner Begegnung zur Friedensförderung held in East Berlin, the 1982 Haager Treffen, Interlit '82 in Cologne and the return to Berlin for a second Begegnung in the Western side of the divided city in 1983. This analysis focusses on key points of these summits' proceedings, argumentation strategies, and outcomes, relating not only to perspectives on the nature of writers' own engagement, argumentation, and rhetoric, but also to their obligations, roles, and positions relative to the wider peace movement. This analysis will be conducted using the transcripts and surrounding debates in the first three conferences presented in the edited volume *Es geht, es geht...*,²⁵⁷ along with additional materials covering the

²⁵⁷ *'Es geht, es geht--': zeitgenössische Schriftsteller und ihr Beitrag zum Frieden: Grenzen und Möglichkeiten*, ed. by Bernt Engelmann, Gerd E. Hoffmann, and others (Goldmann, 1982).

conclusion of the series at the second Berliner Begegnung and further discussions and debates surrounding these summits and the issues raised within them.

6.1. Overview of the summits

The first element which must be set out is the organisation of the meetings at the heart of *Es geht*, namely the Berliner Begegnung zur Friedensförderung, Haager Treffen, and Interlit '82 summit in Cologne. While these summits are leading examples of writers' engagement in this period, they were not alone in the wider terms of professional engagement with the issues of war and peace. An array of similarly important meetings and conferences occurred across the Federal Republic and beyond, including the gloomily titled 1981 conference organised by the German branch of International Physicians for the Prevention of Nuclear War (IPPNW) 'Die Überlebenden werden die Toten beneiden' in Hamburg, which brought together more than 1600 physicians and other participants from across the field of medicine with a focus on the effects of nuclear weapons and die 'Militarisierung des Gesundheitswesens',²⁵⁸ and the Kongress zur Verantwortung für den Frieden in Mainz, in which scientists from a wide range of fields assembled in order to address the questions of maintaining peace.²⁵⁹ While my analysis focusses on the engagement and roles of writers in relation to the peace movement, these figures were not entirely unique in either the themes or the structures of their engagement, and many of

²⁵⁸ Medizinischer Kongress zur Verhinderung des Atomkrieges and others, 'Die Überlebenden werden die Toten beneiden': *Ärzte warnen vor dem Atomkrieg: Materialien des Hamburger 'Medizinischen Kongresses zur Verhinderung des Atomkrieges' vom 19./20. September 1981*, Kleine Bibliothek, p. 244 (Köln: Pahl-Rugenstein, 1982).

²⁵⁹ *Verantwortung für den Frieden*, p. 349.

the roles and obligations put forward in writers' conferences were shared with other engaged figures. Furthermore, the analysis of writers' engagement does not require an oversimplification of engaged writers into a single homogeneous group. The individuals and sub-groups of writers and other figures attending these conferences provide ample diversity and differences of perspective and opinion, which led to varied discussion and occasional disputes across the four summits. These summits are as follows:

The **Berliner Begegnung zur Friedensförderung** took place on 13 and 14 December 1981, as the Hotel Stadt Berlin on East Berlin's Alexanderplatz hosted:

Fast hundert Schriftsteller, Künstler und Wissenschaftler aus beiden deutschen Staaten und aus europäischen Nachbarländern in Ost-Berlin, um über die Bedrohung des Friedens in Ost und West zu sprechen.²⁶⁰

As the preamble to the conference suggests, its focus was primarily on questions of war and peace related to the Cold War tensions between the Eastern and Western blocs. Additionally, the fact that the majority of the attendees were drawn from the two German states along with its location in the divided city of Berlin meant that the discussion was inevitably influenced by questions of German-German relations and comparative conditions of writers and protesters in East and West. However, the proceedings were by no means limited to these issues, as the list of contributors to the Begegnung also included a range of participants from the rest of Europe and, perhaps most

²⁶⁰ *Berliner Begegnung zur Friedensförderung: Protokolle des Schriftstellertreffens Am 13./14. Dezember 1981: Der vollständige Text aller Beiträge aus Ost und West* (Darmstadt: Luchterhand, 1982), p. 1.

importantly, from across an even broader range of fields and professions. This inclusion of academics, scientists, and journalists, among other prominent figures therefore helped to shape the discussions of engagement in general, with distinct questions of the expertise and representative capacity of particular groups including writers highlighted by its heterogeneous makeup. The effect of this diversity in the summit's attendees and discussions was also seen in its aims, as the summit's opening speech by its main organiser Stephan Hermlin shows:

Das Ziel dieser Begegnung liegt also in ihr selbst, in ihrem Stattfinden, in der Herstellung von Vertrauen, das zu weiteren Begegnungen führen sollte.²⁶¹

With this statement of purpose, two themes are evident. Firstly, the expectations for concrete results in the form of declarations or public appeals from the summit were generally low, with an emphasis on the symbolic importance of it taking place and the establishment of contact, open discussion and trust between contributors. Secondly, the aim of building on this basis is also clearly stated, meaning that a measure of the Begegnung's success lay as much in future developments as it did in the actual discussions taking place there.

This future development was soon realised in the form of the **Haager Treffen** from 24 to 26 May 1982, conceptualised as a 'Weiterführung der

²⁶¹ Stephan Hermlin, in *Berliner Begegnung zur Friedensförderung: Protokolle des Schriftstellertreffens Am 13./14. Dezember 1981*, p. 8.

Friedensinitiative europäischer Schriftsteller'.²⁶² Although fulfilling this aim of continuing from the basis of the Berliner Begegnung, this meeting was not a direct successor to the events in East Berlin, and was more focussed on the literary aspects of its attendees' work and contributions to the peace movement. Despite this tighter focus on the literary field, the Haager Treffen achieved a greater sense of diversity in terms of nationalities. While the Berliner Begegnung had been a primarily German-German affair, this subsequent meeting was to some extent a mirror of the diplomatic summits undertaken by the professional political figures at the centre of some of its discussions. This took the form of a pan-European conference dealing with questions of war and peace, taking place in the more neutral space of The Hague. Furthermore, while the prevailing language of the Berliner Begegnung had been German with only a few exceptions, the international tone of the Haager Treffen was further reinforced by numerous contributions made in English, which served as a secondary lingua franca for the meeting's attendees from a total of seventeen countries.²⁶³ This therefore placed considerably less emphasis on the questions of relations between the two German states and more on the common issues affecting Europe as a whole.

The final conference included in *Es geht* is **Interlit '82**, which took place in Cologne and featured the most diverse international makeup out of the four summits, bringing together a huge variety of authors, poets, and other literary figures from forty-eight countries under the heading of

²⁶² 'Gemeinsame Erklärung der Teilnehmer am Haager Treffen vom 26. Mai 1982', in *'Es geht, es geht--'* ed. by Bernt Engelmann, Gerd E. Hoffmann, and others, p. 133.

²⁶³ Bernt Engelmann, Berliner Begegnung, and others, *'Es geht, es geht--'* ed. by Bernt Engelmann, Gerd E. Hoffmann, and others, pp. 136–37.

‘zeitgenössische Schriftsteller und ihr Beitrag zum Frieden’.²⁶⁴ Although this main topic of discussion bore certain similarities to the debates on the subject of war and peace in East Berlin and The Hague, the global nature of Interlit ’82 had the consequence of challenging both the bipolar framework of the threats of the Cold War, and on a more basic level questioning the meaning of the term ‘peace’ and the obligations faced by writers in relation to it. Additionally, this basis for discussion served to emphasise the interconnected nature of literature in an international context, thereby further stressing the importance of avoiding isolation and the common obligations shared by writers across widely varied environments. Another difference which separates the 1982 Interlit conference from the previous two examples was the factor of organisational involvement, as writers’ groups such as the Verband deutscher Schriftsteller along with counterpart organisations from a variety of other countries took on a driving role in proceedings, in contrast to the more individual organisational structure of the Berliner Begegnung and Haager Treffen. As further analysis will show, this was to play an important role in defining organisations’ and individuals’ involvement and attitudes towards the meetings and their outcomes.

Although these three summits in Berlin, The Hague and Cologne present a compelling narrative of expanding scope of writers’ participation, both in terms of the conferences themselves and as a parallel to the expanding mobilisation of the wider peace movement throughout the action phase in the early 1980s, a crucial fourth part of this development is missing, namely the

²⁶⁴ Engelmann, *Berliner Begegnung*, and others, p. 141.

return to Berlin for the **second Berliner Begegnung** in April 1983.²⁶⁵ In contrast to the trends towards international issues and collaborative efforts in the previous three summits, this final conference had a decidedly different character, being marked firstly by a return to discussions and issues centring on East-West divisions and the two German states, and secondly by a noticeable derailment of peace movement discussions by more partisan issues, most notably in the form of controversial critiques of human rights and the peace movement under socialism. As such, a further parallel to the wider peace movement's most active phase can be identified with the fragmentation and diversification of participating writers' engagement within the context of the conference series, albeit occurring before the end of the wider movement's action phase, and not precluding other forms of engagement beyond the conferences, as the previous chapter's analysis of the 1983 protest actions demonstrated. Although expressed in different ways to the previous summits, the theme of obligation played a vital role at the second Berliner Begegnung, most notably in the conflicts between simultaneously held obligations which served to further divide the discussion, in contrast to the cohesive effects seen previously. Despite these issues and the less than entirely successful outcome of this conference, the themes it presented were just as important as the previous three summits, meaning that it forms an indispensable part of a complete analysis of these developments.

²⁶⁵ Berliner Begegnung and Akademie der Künste (Berlin, Germany), *Den Frieden erklären: Protokolle des zweiten Schriftstellertreffens am 22./23. April 1983: Der vollständige Text aller Beiträge aus Ost und West*, Sammlung Luchterhand (Darmstadt: H. Luchterhand, 1983).

6.2. Argumentation

Following this brief outline of the conferences themselves, the key lines of argumentation which defined their structure and discussions provide a further insight into the importance of these summits in relation to the peace movement and the themes of writers' engagement and obligation within them. This section aims to identify and closely examine four key debates running through each of the conferences, and consequently of the approaches to engagement and obligation shown in these arguments.

6.2.1. Threat

The first major theme of the discussions running through the four summits was the issue of threat and its impact on the lives and undertakings of their attendees. Given the context of the Cold War tensions and other threatening circumstances surrounding the conferences in question, it is hardly surprising that this factor played such a central role in each of these events. However, in spite of its pervasive presence in this period, the ways in which this issue were approached, its effects, and even the basic definitions of what was meant by the term 'threat' varied greatly, to the point where presenting a single perspective on its effects or its role in writers' endeavours in relation to the peace movement would be an oversimplification. Thus, this analysis of the factor of threat within the four summits must take into account the multitude of varied and at times conflicting approaches to the theme of threat which came to light over the course of these discussions.

The first of these approaches which was most prevalent in the first Berliner Begegnung and Haager Treffen focusses on the looming threat of

nuclear war primarily based on the geopolitical tensions between the two Cold War superpowers, and is indicative of wider trends within the peace movement, both in the arguments put forward as part of its varied protest actions, and as a factor in the broad spectrum mobilisation which supported it. While the writers' discussions which took place in these two summits did not share the mass mobilisation structure of the peace movement's demonstrations, common themes and lines of argumentation were in evidence. As with the more general discussion of threats and fears linked to this theme, the discussion within the two summits in East Berlin and The Hague commonly draws on a sense of imminence regarding this threatened destruction, with the former in particular being defined by this factor from its inception, as is demonstrated by the identification of 'die Verfinsterung der militärischen und politischen Situation' as the main inspiration for open debate in Stephan Hermlin's invitation letter to the summit.²⁶⁶ Jurij Brězan's main contribution to the first Berliner Begegnung stands out as a particularly vivid example of this, as he compares the helplessness of European citizens caught beneath this exterior threat to that of slaves saluting the Roman Emperor before facing their deaths in the gladiatorial arena, citing projections of around 300 million deaths in Europe in the event of such a war.²⁶⁷ This therefore presents the threat of nuclear war as not only a potentially devastating event, but also one which was far beyond the control of European citizens, whose fates were entirely dependent on American and Soviet political and military power.

²⁶⁶ Hermlin, Einladungsbrief zur Berliner Begegnung (Correspondence, 22 September 1981)

²⁶⁷ Jurij Brězan, in *Berliner Begegnung zur Friedensförderung: Protokolle des Schriftstellertreffens Am 13./14. Dezember 1981*, p. 42.

This sense of a looming threat over Europe continued into the Haager Treffen, where it was again a central point of discussion. Building on the previous discussion, the scope of this second summit expanded to include other elements of imminent threat, to the point where the central discussion point ‘Europa rüstet zur Katastrophe’ encompassed the threats posed by:

Wettrüsten, ökologischer Zusammenbruch, Zuspitzung des Nord-Süd-Konflikts, Souveränitätsverlust, wachsende Abhängigkeit, atomarer Untergang.²⁶⁸

This trend towards diversification of the threats facing the world highlights a further aspect of the discussion in these summits which was shared with many of the arguments in the wider peace movement, namely the inescapable universality of threat, and associated universal obligations to react against it.

Alongside these grand engagements with political and military threats on an international level, a secondary line of argumentation was also in evidence, and was closely aligned with a general strategy in the wider peace movement identified by Susanne Schregel as a ‘Wendung in den Nahraum’, bringing issues of war, peace and threat into the context of everyday existence and familiar spaces.²⁶⁹ Unlike some other engagements with this theme, the discussion of this everyday aspect of threat remained very much focussed on its influence on the lives and works of writers, as could perhaps have been expected in the context of writers’ summits. As such, the discussions presented

²⁶⁸ Bernt Engelmann, ‘Das Haager Treffen’, in *‘Es geht, es geht--’* ed. by Bernt Engelmann, Gerd E. Hoffmann, and others, p. 65.

²⁶⁹ Susanne Schregel, ‘Der Atomkrieg vor der Wohnungstür: eine Politikgeschichte der neuen Friedensbewegung in der Bundesrepublik 1970 - 1985’ (Frankfurt am Main: Campus, 2011), p. 11.

in the Haager Treffen in particular brought the spectre of nuclear war not so much *vor die Wohnungstür* as *vor den Schreibtisch*, as is shown in contributions such as Martin Gregor-Dellin's impassioned declaration that 'so weitermachen können wir nicht mehr!' on the basis that the threat of nuclear war had irrevocably altered the way in which writers needed to approach their work and their audiences.²⁷⁰ This sentiment is also in evidence with the 'Gemeinsame Erklärung' at the end of the summit, which reaffirms the roles of engaged writers in the face of 'wachsenden Kriegsgefahr',²⁷¹ not only in terms of general opposition to the threat of war, but also with specific positional obligations for writers to use their expertise with the written and spoken word in order to engage effectively with these issues.

However, this factor of threat in everyday existence, whether for writers or for the general population, was at times problematic. While additional issues such as the disparity in living conditions between the northern and southern hemispheres had been mentioned over the course of the Haager Treffen, their importance was mainly deemed secondary to the chief concerns of the threatening situation faced in Europe of the confrontation between the two Cold War powers. This did not remain the case in the more international context of Interlit '82, in which the questions of everyday existence and threat were themselves subject to more focussed debate and became a central issue in the conference. Although the threat of nuclear war and large-scale destruction remained an important factor in this summit, as is shown in the emphasis starting in the event's opening comments that 'niemals zuvor in der

²⁷⁰ Martin Gregor-Dellin, in *'Es geht, es geht--'* ed. by Bernt Engelmann, Gerd E. Hoffmann, and others, p. 113.

²⁷¹ Engelmann, Hoffmann, and others, 'Gemeinsame Erklärung der Teilnehmer am Haager Treffen vom 26. Mai 1982', p. 133.

Geschichte der Menschheit war zugleich mit dem Frieden die Existenz des Menschens so elementar bedroht wie heute',²⁷² a second definition of threat and its influence in everyday existence was also put forward and vehemently defended by participants from outside the Western and Eastern blocs in particular, as is demonstrated by the Congolese writer and poet Maxime Ndebeka:

Das Thema dieser Tagung ist der Kampf gegen den Atomkrieg, aber es gibt noch eine andere Bombe. Wenn man vom Frieden sprechen will, muß man dieses Problem in den allgemeinen Prozeß, die Entwicklung des Planeten, der ganzen Menschheit einordnen. Der Frieden nützt allen Völkern der Erde, den europäischen und amerikanischen ebenso wie den Völkern der Dritten Welt.²⁷³

This importance of further issues and threatened daily existence was further strengthened by Ndebeka's own history of public engagement, as he was living in exile in France at the time of the Interlit summit after receiving a death sentence from the Congolese authorities as a result of a number of his poems becoming rallying cries for anti-government protests in his native country.²⁷⁴ These dire consequences of provocative activities in a Congolese context present a stark contrast to the relatively comfortable surroundings of European writing and engagement. A further distinction can also be made between the kinds of threat dealt with by writers in these 'First World' and

²⁷² 'Präambel zu den Internationalen Literaturtagen', in *'Es geht, es geht--'* ed. by Bernt Engelmann, Gerd E. Hoffmann, and others, p. 148.

²⁷³ Maxime Ndebeka, in *'Es geht, es geht--'* ed. by Bernt Engelmann, Gerd E. Hoffmann, and others, p. 233.

²⁷⁴ 'La Maison Des Auteurs: Maxime N'Débeka'

<<http://www.lesfrancophonies.com/maison-des-auteurs/ndebeka-maxime>> [accessed 28 December 2013].

‘Third World’ surroundings, as is shown in the contribution of the Nicaraguan writer Lizandro Chavez Alfaro, who expands on the ‘andere Bombe’ put forward by Ndebeka:

Ich fürchte, für die Europäer ist Aggression und Krieg etwas sehr Abstraktes. Für uns ist es eine Alltagssache. Wir haben gegen diese Aggression Jahre, Jahrzehnte gekämpft.²⁷⁵

With this, the threats felt in different contexts are laid out on a more or less equal footing. Both are seen as relevant and potentially catastrophic, but the European sense of threat is portrayed in much more absolute terms, as a comfortable existence threatened by the abstract possibility of total annihilation, while the situation in Nicaragua and other ‘Third World’ countries was defined by constant violence and lower-scale conflict – less destructive than a nuclear exchange, but absolutely not to be ignored either. These contributions therefore show a common conception shared by numerous attendees of the Interlit conference and beyond that while Europe lay under the sword of Damocles as a result of the tensions of the Cold War, much of the rest of the world faced the prospect of a thousand smaller cuts.

In spite of these differing approaches to the issue of threat in different circumstances, the conclusion of Interlit ’82 was able to reach a similar partial consensus as in the Berliner Begegnung and Haager Treffen, in which these perspectives on threat were brought together in the Internationaler Schriftstellerappell an die Weltöffentlichkeit, also known as the Kölner

²⁷⁵ Lizandro Chavez Alfaro, in *‘Es geht, es geht--’* ed. by Bernt Engelmann, Gerd E. Hoffmann, and others, p. 235.

Manifest '82, which represented participating writers from forty-eight countries from Australia to Zambia, and concentrated on three main points:

- die vollständige Beseitigung aller Massenvernichtungswaffen
- einen gerechten Interessenausgleich ohne Krieg und
- die Schaffung friedlicher, freiheitlicher und menschenwürdiger Zustände in allen Erdteilen.²⁷⁶

With this established, the general tone following the Interlit conference was that the various forms of threat, from all-out nuclear war looming over Europe to everyday violence and oppression elsewhere in the world were each deserving of attention and engagement, and that engagements with them were not mutually exclusive, and arguably shared obligations towards action within a global context. Thus, almost counterintuitively, the points of division regarding these different forms of threat could also be seen as a point of unity, serving to support action and engagement on an ever-increasing scale to meet the multitude of threats in the world. While the second Berliner Begegnung marked a return to the issue of threat in a European context, particularly between the Eastern and Western blocs, this should not be seen as ignoring or discounting the issue of threats in other contexts, but rather a return to focus on one particular aspect of a larger, multi-faceted issue which could be addressed through simultaneous or parallel forms of engagement.

²⁷⁶ 'Internationaler Schriftstellerappell an die Weltöffentlichkeit (Kölner Manifest '82)', in *'Es geht, es geht--'* ed. by Bernt Engelmann, Gerd E. Hoffmann, and others, p. 405.

6.2.2. Utopianism and pragmatism

A second issue which inspired heated discussion and served as a major defining feature of the summits in question concerned not an external feature of political discourse imposed on writers, but rather an internal feature of the arguments put forward by the participating figures over the course of the summits and beyond, namely the debate between supporters of utopianism and pragmatism in relation to the peace movement. In contrast to the previously examined factor of threat, the sides taken in this debate often had little to do with geographic origins or specific circumstances of their proponents, instead often depending on personal perspectives on the possibilities and consequences of engagement, and the associated obligations underpinning them.

The importance of realistic, pragmatic approaches to the themes approached in the summits was forcefully stated beginning with the first Berliner Begegnung, as can be seen in Dieter Lattmann's comments regarding empty political statements:

Doch nun zu dem, was wir praktisch tun können: Wir sind hier, weil wir die Verantwortung nicht abwälzen, weil es *unsere Verantwortung* ist. Rein politische Erklärungen nützen uns relativ wenig.²⁷⁷

Two clear points are made on the importance of pragmatism. Firstly, the idea that purely political statements were of limited use acknowledges the multitude of possible issues which could be commented on, from the geopolitical concerns of the Cold War to the crisis in Poland which was unfolding while the summit took place, to the more fundamental questions of

²⁷⁷ Dieter Lattmann, in *Berliner Begegnung zur Friedensförderung: Protokolle des Schriftstellertreffens am 13./14. Dezember 1981*, pp. 63–64.

power and ideologies, and that any attempt to tackle all of these issues over the course of a single summit of European writers was simply not feasible. Indeed, as was demonstrated in the descent into more partisan debates during the second Berliner Begegnung over the issues of human rights under socialism, this diversion into taking on too many controversial issues was a real problem which not all of the summits were able to avoid. This pragmatic approach was important not only in terms of the issues taken on, but also in the ways in which these issues were discussed.

The second way in which this approach supported a more cautious, pragmatic course of action for the assembled attendees lies in the importance, but also in the limitations of their positional obligations, as is evidenced by Lattmann's emphasis on 'unsere Verantwortung'. This conception of writers' positional obligations is quite specific, in that it recognises the ability of public figures to exert influence on certain matters relating to public and political discourse, but at the same time limits this influence to roles which could be effectively supported by their obligations. Lattmann's conception of writers' positional obligations is as much concerned with what these figures must *avoid* doing as it is with what they must do.

This does not mean however that Lattmann's position should be seen as a pessimistic outlook on the possible influence of writers and other engaged figures. While the necessity of remaining within the realm of practicality is emphasised, the scope of what was seen as practical also included realistic political influence, as Lattmann elaborates:

Die Politiker ernennen sich selbst immer wieder zu Realisten. Ich fürchte, daß der Wirklichkeitssinn – zumindest in meinem Land – von manchen verantwortlichen Politikern zumindest teilweise auf Sprecher der Friedensbewegung übergegangen ist.²⁷⁸

This sense of realism, often coupled with an optimistic estimation of the influence of writers, continued into the Haager Treffen, most notably with a warning put forward by Günter Gaus:

Wir müssen die Realitäten verändern, an die Stelle der überholten kriegsgefährlichen Realität eine neue setzen. Aber es müssen politisch machbare Realitäten sein.²⁷⁹

This comment proved to be somewhat controversial, and attracted counterarguments from Jurek Becker and Peter Poulsen among others, with the former noting the importance of argumentation in altering political discourse even at the highest levels, regardless of how realistic such a goal would have been perceived beforehand,²⁸⁰ and the latter reaffirming writers' obligations to engage with the themes of war and peace for the sake of their readerships 'ob es nun realistisch ist oder nicht'.²⁸¹ This sense of obligation to act regardless of whether the end goals could be termed realistic or utopian continued into the Interlit '82 summit, as is exemplified in Bernt Engelmann's own major

²⁷⁸ Lattmann, 1982, p. 64.

²⁷⁹ Günter Gaus, in *'Es geht, es geht--'* ed. by Bernt Engelmann and others, p. 112.

²⁸⁰ Jurek Becker, in *'Es geht, es geht--'* ed. by Bernt Engelmann and others, p. 105.

²⁸¹ Peter Poulsen, in *'Es geht, es geht--'* ed. by Bernt Engelmann and others, p. 106.

contribution to the proceedings, welcoming the attendees as a representative of the Verband deutscher Schriftsteller:

Wir können den Gefühlen und Gedanken Ausdruck verleihen, das Bewußtsein der Menschen wecken, ihnen deutlich machen, wie die Welt sein könnte, wie sie sein sollte. Wir können Utopien entwickeln, sie gedanklich konkretisieren und so der Wirklichkeit, der Verwirklichung, näherbringen.²⁸²

As with the previous arguments supporting realistic or pragmatic approaches, this line of utopian thinking was also in evidence during the previous conferences in Berlin and The Hague, with the arguments of figures such as Friedrich Jung serving both to support the kind of utopian optimism taken up by some colleagues, and to provoke the aforementioned calls for pragmatism from others, for instance regarding the particular role of engaged writers in their role as artists:

Der Künstler, wenn er gut ist, kann Emotionen schaffen, kann er Angst, aber auch Hoffnung und schließlich Handeln bei den von seinem Werk gefesselten Menschen entwickeln. [...] Man könnte denken, was ich jetzt gesagt habe, ist eine Utopie. Aber wenn man sich etwas ansieht, was die Friedensbewegung in Westeuropa im gegenwärtigen Moment erreicht hat, dann sieht man, daß das keine Utopie ist.²⁸³

²⁸² Bernt Engelmann, 'Begrüßung der Teilnehmer im Namen des Verbandes deutscher Schriftsteller (VS) in der IG Druck und Papier', in *'Es geht, es geht--'* ed. by Bernt Engelmann and others, p. 170.

²⁸³ Friedrich Jung, in *Berliner Begegnung zur Friedensförderung: Protokolle des Schriftstellertreffens am 13./14. Dezember 1981*, pp. 105-06.

This conception of writers' influence draws on the forms of social and discursive influence ascribed to the roles of these engaged figures examined in Chapter 4, most notably in the representation of higher ideals in their capacity as a moral authority. In addition to performing this role, Jung adds an additional positional obligation for engaged writers to provide emotional inspiration to their readers through their engaged writing, mirroring the emotional impact of other creative works. However, the link between writer and audience put forward by Jung is considerably more direct than the contributing roles taken on by engaged writers in relation to the wider peace movement and its mass mobilised support bases, which tended to focus more on the expression of shared ideas and emotions rather than the direct inspiration of hope and action in an audience who would otherwise have lacked these elements. Nonetheless, while Jung presents a somewhat simplified and direct form of influence, his emphasis on engagement with ideals as both an area of expertise and as a key positional obligation remains an important factor in the definition and justification of writers' roles. A similar theme was touched on by Heinrich Böll during the Interlit conference, again focussing on criticisms of some of the more idealistic elements of the peace movement's goals and the writers' discussions as unrealisable:

Wer uns vor Utopien warnt, dem möchte ich vorhalten, daß wir in verwirklichten Utopien leben: der Traum des Dädalus, den immer wieder jene Verrückten zu verwirklichen suchten, die des Gelächters und des Hohns sicher sein konnten: er ist denen, die ins Flugzeug

steigen wie in einen Bus, zur banalen Selbstverständlichkeit geworden.²⁸⁴

Although not providing a particularly encouraging timescale – the time between the legend of Daedalus and Icarus and the invention of actual powered flight was by no means brief – the fundamental point of ideas being derided as unfeasible or utopian slowly changing into mundane realities remains important. Similarly, even the most idealistic of the summits’ participants were clearly aware that the assembled writers and other prominent figures would not be able to declare and realise world peace, even with the best arguments in the world. As such, the more ambitious statements coming from these events, such as the calls for the ‘gleichzeitig und vorbehaltlos’ dissolution of both NATO and the Warsaw Pact made as part of the *Gemeinsame Erklärung der Teilnehmer am Haager Treffen*²⁸⁵ and again in the *Kölner Manifest*²⁸⁶ should not be seen as demands made with a clear expectation of immediate realisation, but rather as the fulfilment of moral and positional obligations taken on by the writers in question to take a stand on these issues, and use their prominent status and expertise in having their voices heard in order to bear witness to troubling developments, and to seek to influence public discussions of these issues.

²⁸⁴ Heinrich Böll, ‘Welche Bilder haben Völker voneinander?’, in *‘Es geht, es geht--’* ed. by Bernt Engelmann and others, p. 193.

²⁸⁵ Engelmann, Hoffmann, and others, ‘*Gemeinsame Erklärung der Teilnehmer am Haager Treffen vom 26. Mai 1982*’, p. 133.

²⁸⁶ Engelmann, Hoffmann, and others, ‘*Internationaler Schriftstellerappell an die Weltöffentlichkeit (Kölner Manifest ’82)*’, p. 405.

This was further exemplified by the attitude of Sergei Michalkov, President of the Union of Soviet Writers and leading voice behind the proposition, stating that:

Was die Regierungen darüber denken und was sie tun, ist eine andere Sache, aber wir sollten sie fordern!²⁸⁷

While the significance of Michalkov endorsing this engagement in the context of the Soviet system and his particularly prominent position within in go somewhat beyond the scope of this analysis, this statement highlights two final aspects of the arguably utopian perspectives put forward during this conference series. The first of these lies in the critical, irritant role in relation to politics, which emphasises a form of writers' influence through speaking out, but does not set out a distinct political role for these figures. Writers are not portrayed as needing to make policies of their own, or in any other way take over the role of politicians, and their influence is limited to their critical judgement. Additionally, this perspective presents a sense of shared obligation for engaged writers across political and social contexts, and argues that while 'die Regierungen' may differ, the underlying obligations of 'wir' engaged writers to put forward their critical perspectives remain constant.

6.2.3. The roles of writers

A further line of argumentation with a defining influence on the proceedings builds on the basis established by the discussions of threat and utopianism along with other topics, and concerns a more specific question of the roles and obligations of both writers and political figures involved in and relating to the

²⁸⁷ Sergei Michalkov, in *'Es geht, es geht--'* ed. by Bernt Engelmann and others, p. 131.

peace movement. As was shown in Chapter 4, the expected and fulfilled roles of writers were an important part of their public engagement, and were supported by an equally wide range of obligations. Over the course of the four summits under examination a number of particular roles were put forward and discussed in particular detail, which in turn had an important effect on the overall tone and perspectives on the summits themselves.

The first of these roles to be laid out came in the form of a somewhat strict divide between the roles of writers and politicians, as was seen in Stephan Hermlin's opening speech at the very beginning of the first Berliner Begegnung:

Wir bilden uns nicht ein, die Welt aus den Angeln heben zu können. Wir können und wollen Politikern ihre Arbeit nicht abnehmen. Aber manche Leute hören auf uns, und wir wollen im Rahmen einer großen Bewegung einen Beitrag leisten.²⁸⁸

This conception delineates a clear but not necessarily hostile us-and-them mentality set between 'wir', a distinct group of writers, academics and other intellectuals not necessarily limited to those attending the meeting, in opposition to (or rather *avoiding* direct opposition to) a similarly distinct group of professional politicians. This separation has a number of important implications. Firstly, the conceptualisation of two separate groups of writers and politicians acknowledges the primary responsibility of politicians in policy-making and taking the leading role in political discourse. As such, this establishment of roles appears to support the more pragmatically inclined

²⁸⁸ Hermlin, p. 7.

arguments seen in the section above, with the function of direct political influence implied to be included within politicians' own work. However, the following sentence acknowledging the fact that 'manche Leute hören auf uns' and that the goal of the first Begegnung was to make a contribution in these political terms shows that the more ambitious, optimistic estimation of writers' influential capabilities was also in evidence. Thus, the dividing line envisaged by Hermlin in the first Berliner Begegnung was not focussed on different forms of threat or on utopian and pragmatic thinking, but rather on the influence of writers and politicians and their respective areas. This conception draws heavily on the concept of distinct, separate roles for writers and politicians examined in Chapter 4, and particularly the expected role of engaged writers to act in an irritant capacity in relation to their political counterparts. Perhaps unsurprisingly, given the less than favourable attitude of the East German state towards directly critical writers, Hermlin's conception of this role is somewhat less confrontational than those put forward by many Western participants, and emphasises the division of areas of expertise in the exercise of this critical function over a directly oppositional relationship, but nonetheless reinforces the importance of writers taking on a critical role in relation to politics without intruding on the separate roles of politicians themselves.

This strictly divided model of writers' and politicians' roles did not go unchallenged, for instance with the implicit recognition that a number of the attendees of the first Berliner Begegnung such as the respective heads of the West- and East German Schriftstellerverbände Bernt Engelmann and Hermann Kant held organisational roles with direct involvement and influence in

political affairs, albeit in markedly different ways within their respective organisations and political systems. This proved to be a constant element throughout the remainder of the conference series, as each of these summits included at least a handful of writers with additional political influence or roles which served to undermine the impression of a strict dividing line between groups, from the Haager Treffen's Sergei Michalkov as mentioned above, to the involvement of figures as varied as the SPD deputy Freimut Duve and the Secretary General of the Yugoslav Writers' Union Ivan Ivanji in Interlit '82.

These grey areas between the two camps were further complicated with the possibility of individuals holding multiple roles and associated positional obligations, such as Kant's status as a representative of the SED in the East German Volkskammer or Günter Grass's direct involvement in supporting the SPD during this period, among many others. This lack of a clear dividing line between camps continued into the Haager Treffen, again beginning very early in the proceedings, with a message of greeting for the assembled participants from Willy Brandt included in the opening remarks from Bernt Engelmann, which was described as particularly appropriate, given that the former Chancellor was 'schließlich auch Schriftsteller und politischer Publizist sowie Mitglied unseres P.E.N.-Zentrums'.²⁸⁹

In spite of the line between these groups being somewhat less clear than Hermlin's original opening statement may have implied, further elaboration on the expected roles and obligations of these two groups served to show that there were indeed a number of key differences between them, even if

²⁸⁹ Bernt Engelmann, in *'Es geht, es geht--'* ed. by Bernt Engelmann and others, p. 69.

certain individuals were able to flit between the two sets or occupy the grey areas between them. Paradoxically, the clearest way in which this was expressed begins with a perspective on the common ground between the two groups, and was expressed by the Dutch writer Harry Mulisch in the opening stages of the Haager Treffen:

Denn genau das ist doch, was wir Schriftsteller gemeinsam haben mit Politikern: unsere Worte sind unsere Taten. Und dabei sollten wir genauso abgefeimt zu Werke gehen wie sie. Sonst werden sie dasitzen und uns auslachen.²⁹⁰

With this, a common theme of the importance of words and use of language is established between the roles of writers and politicians. However, further commentaries on this topic serve to distinguish the two groups on the basis of how this language is used. While the importance of political figures fulfilling promises and representing their constituents is emphasised as the basis of their legitimation, the importance of the use of speech on the part of writers, particularly with regards to the peace movement, is outlined as having more to do with ideas and modes of thinking, as in Günter de Bruyn's contribution:

Auf die Frage, was Schriftsteller für den Frieden tun können, antworte ich: Sie müssen Aufklärung betreiben, denn die, eine Sache des Denkens, wird vor allem vermittelt durch Sprache, und wir, die wir mit dieser vertraut sein sollten, müssen dafür sorgen, daß sie Denken nicht verbaut, sondern ermöglicht, daß sie die schlimmen Dinge beim Namen

²⁹⁰ Harry Mulisch, in *'Es geht, es geht--'* ed. by Bernt Engelmann and others, p. 68.

nennt, daß sie das Fragestellen und das Infragestellen fördert, daß sie also dazu beitragen kann, die durch Vorurteile, Einseitigkeiten, Halbwahrheiten und Lügen in Unmündigkeit Gehaltenen aus dieser herauszuführen.²⁹¹

This influence on ways of thinking and actions is further reinforced by numerous other participants, including Christa Wolf's examination of 'Friedensfähigkeit' and the obligations of writers to use their reader base and public presence to help encourage its development,²⁹² and an expansion on this theme by the Finnish writer and activist Kalevi Haikara with a plea for writers to work towards this goal by approaching the theme of peace in the same exciting and emotionally engaging manner as conflicts in their own work.²⁹³

There are two important implications of this role of influencing ways of thought and world views. Firstly, this conception draws on the role of writers in an irritant capacity, using their status and expertise in order to challenge politicians and political arguments. In the particular context of the Second Cold War, with rising tensions and increasingly aggressive political rhetoric surrounding the question of nuclear armament and preparations for possible war scenarios, the importance of external critique of political discourse was seen as particularly important, and was reinforced by an inherent dimension of writers' detachment from political issues, at least to a greater extent than purely political figures. In other words, as Stefan Heym argued in a similar

²⁹¹ Günter de Bruyn, in *'Es geht, es geht--'* ed. by Bernt Engelmann and others, p. 84.

²⁹² Christa Wolf, in *'Es geht, es geht--'* ed. by Bernt Engelmann and others, p. 102.

²⁹³ Kalevi Haikara, in *'Es geht, es geht--'* ed. by Bernt Engelmann and others, p. 98.

fashion to Günter Grass's perspective on the issue of nuclear armament examined in the previous chapter:

Um ein bekanntes Wort zu variieren: Der Frieden ist eine zu ernste Sache, um sie den Politikern zu überlassen. Zumindest nicht ihnen allein.²⁹⁴

Secondly, this conception also underlines the positional obligations of writers using their public presence and reach in order to achieve this end, combined with moral obligation to do so with the aim of furthering peaceful development and avoiding unnecessary conflict. Given that this conception portrays this function not only as a necessity, but also as a role which can only be undertaken by those with specific expertise, public recognition, and ability to have their voices heard, a strong positional obligation is put forward on the part of engaged writers. This does not mean that engaged writers were the only group who were capable of undertaking such a critical role, as this argument for wider debate also extends beyond discussions between writers, but it portrays these figures as particularly well placed to help bring issues into public discussion.

While forays into political and social influence were presented in a mostly optimistic light in the context of the previous summits, their roles proved to be somewhat more problematic in the second Berliner Begegnung, particularly in the developing contrast between supporting the peace movement and the wider issues of human rights. While these issues had been presented at the Interlit summit as parallel courses, or varied ways in which engaged writers

²⁹⁴ Stefan Heym, in *'Es geht, es geht--'* ed. by Bernt Engelmann and others, p. 89.

could address the issues of threat and peace according to the circumstances they found themselves in, perspectives on the roles of writers became considerably more divisive with the prospect of writers' obligations to make a unified effort in support of the peace movement clashing with more general moral obligations to support human rights, leading some writers from the Western bloc to take on a critical role in direct opposition to governmental policies undertaken in socialist systems. One of the most provocative statements to this end was made by Peter Schneider:

Wir nähern uns einem Frieden, der nur noch in der Vermeidung des Atomkrieges besteht und wo das Wort Frieden auch eine Art Polizeiknüppel wird, das dazu benutzt wird, alle Widersprüche im Inneren niederzukuñpeln und zu sagen, darüber wollen wir jetzt nicht verhandeln, nicht reden, diese Demonstration nicht zulassen, weil sie nämlich den Frieden gefährdet. D.h., wir nähern uns einem Frieden, der allmählich unlebbar wird.²⁹⁵

Aside from being directly confrontational towards the East German state and its policies regarding peace protests, this statement highlights several aspects of the roles of writers which came to the fore during the second Berliner Begegnung. Firstly, the position of exercising political influence became more directly influenced by the role of bearing witness to troubling developments and its supporting positional obligations for writers to use their status and expertise to have their voices heard on these issues, even at the expense of limiting discussions within this final summit to more

²⁹⁵ Peter Schneider, in *Den Frieden erklären: Protokolle des zweiten Schriftstellertreffens am 22./23. April 1983*, Sammlung Luchterhand (Darmstadt: H. Luchterhand, 1983), p. 69.

confrontational debates between participants from the Eastern and Western blocs.

In the light of this development, the arguments put forward in the second Berliner Begegnung also mark a retreat from the cohesive role of writers in relation to their political influence. These more divisive positions therefore marked a retreat from both the unifying efforts in the previous summits and the sense of unity in the more general terms of writers using their influence to contribute to the peace movement, and with it reflected the decline of the minimal consensus and diversification of the wider peace movement itself which was occurring by 1983. Finally, and related to this decline in cohesive engagement on the part of writers, the debates within the second Berliner Begegnung marked an additional withdrawal from the pragmatic considerations which had underpinned the previous three summits, as many of the contributing writers defined their influential roles with general moral obligations which left considerably less room for compromise and cooperative action.

6.2.4. Perspectives on protest and protesters

The final line of argumentation which played an important role in the four summits concerns their relationship with the rest of the peace movement, both in West Germany and on a global scale. Over the course of these events, a potentially divisive issue came to light, in that the summits were by design isolated and exclusive affairs, with both the selection of participants and a large proportion of the discussions representing a somewhat small niche within the wider peace movement. Given the multifaceted nature of the peace movement, this was not necessarily an unsurmountable problem. However, the

question of how these conferences viewed the rest of the movement and how the vaunted 'Beitrag zum Frieden' was approached and influenced discussions must still be carefully considered.

As was examined in Chapter 2, the West German peace movement in the late 1970s and early 1980s was primarily fuelled and led by broad-spectrum mass mobilisation, with key protest actions from demonstrations and blockades to petitions and appeals organised through a multitude of local, regional, and national organisations. As such, the actions of engaged writers such as the attendees of the four conferences, both within these events and with others, were primarily in a supporting role.

In spite of the previously examined argumentation and often idealistic or even utopian discussions on the part of the conferences' attendees, there were few illusions on this point, as was established at the very beginning of the first Berliner Begegnung, with Stephan Hermlin's statement of purpose. However, while the specific goal of 'im Rahmen einer großen Bewegung einen Beitrag leisten'²⁹⁶ demonstrates the primacy of the wider peace movement and the goal of the first summit in this series of contributing to it, the relationship between the participating engaged writers and the other members of the peace movement was much less clearly defined at the outset. Additionally, while the participation of engaged writers in both direct protest actions and conferences constituted a contributing role to the larger peace movement, the nature of this contribution differed greatly between the two contexts. As the previous chapter showed, the contributions of engaged writers in the mass mobilised protest actions in this period generally focussed on these figures adding their voices to

²⁹⁶ Hermlin, p. 7.

the message of the demonstrations, acting as one part of a larger collective action. In contrast to this, the four conferences examined here were much smaller events, and more tangentially related to the wider peace movement, but had a much tighter focus on the discussions between participating writers. This therefore meant that the four conferences provided an opportunity for engaged writers to take a leading role in the message put forward from these smaller events, which in turn contributed to the themes and arguments of the wider peace movement.

This does not mean that the efforts and successes of mass mobilised protest actions were completely ignored during the first Berliner Begegnung. This can be seen with the opinion expressed by Günter Grass that ‘nur noch Verweigerung und anhaltender Protest können eine Umkehr erzwingen’ in relation to increasing aggression and militarisation,²⁹⁷ alongside the recognition by several figures including Rolf Schneider and Jürgen Kuczynski of the importance of open, public demonstrations and the successes achieved thus far, such as the Hamburger Kirchentag and Bonn demonstration earlier in the year, with Professor Kuczynski going as far as to state that ‘Schriftsteller, Künstler, auch die Wissenschaftler’ had much to learn from these actions and the level of commitment behind them.²⁹⁸ However, these mentions did not mean that the recognition of mass protest actions was at the heart of the Berliner Begegnung’s discussion. In fact, even two of the aforementioned examples used their references to protest actions as a subsidiary point, with both Grass and Schneider comparing developments in the peace movement in the two

²⁹⁷ Günter Grass, in *Berliner Begegnung zur Friedensförderung: Protokolle des Schriftstellertreffens am 13./14. Dezember 1981*, p. 46.

²⁹⁸ Jürgen Kuczynski, in *Berliner Begegnung zur Friedensförderung: Protokolle des Schriftstellertreffens am 13./14. Dezember 1981*, p. 27.

German states, rather than offering a direct perspective on the endeavours of fellow supporters of the wider peace movement.

As a result of this, the two summits in Berlin were characterised as more internal affairs focussing on discussions between their participants rather than open protest events directly contributing to the peace movement. The tone of these discussions therefore differed significantly from the directly engaged public statements made in the appeals at the end of the previous conferences, and the statements supporting the protest actions examined in the previous chapter, as more room was provided for open debate and contrasts between opposing viewpoints, as well as the perspectives on roles and obligations which defined and justified them. This was not to say that these debates were always resolved, or even ultimately productive, but their presence was nonetheless more pronounced in these internal discussions than elsewhere.

Returning to Stephan Hermlin's original intentions and stated objectives in the first *Begegnung*, this was of course a complete fulfilment of their purpose. Nonetheless, a certain criticism of this inwardness was also in evidence, as can be seen in Robert Jungk's commentary towards the end of the first summit's proceedings:

Wir sitzen hier alle in einem Raum ohne Fenster. Wir sitzen hier bei künstlicher Beleuchtung. Wir schauen nicht hinaus auf den Himmel. Ich glaube aber, wir sollten auf den Himmel schauen. Wir sollten nicht vergessen, daß wir unter einem Himmel leben. Wir sollten nicht vergessen, daß der andere Mensch nicht die Chiffre, der Gegner ist,

sondern ein Mensch aus Fleisch und Blut, mit Hoffnung und mit Erwartungen.²⁹⁹

This sense of isolation continued to a certain degree in the Haager Treffen and Interlit conferences, but two key elements distinguished these events from their predecessor in Berlin. Firstly, the fact that these two summits took place in 1982, slightly further into the action phase of the peace movement's development, dominated by mass mobilised protest actions, meant that the wider peace movement and its broad support bases featured slightly more prominently in discussions relating to issues of war and peace than a few months previously in East Berlin. Secondly, due to the expanded nature of these two events and their more international constitution, the themes of unity and common purpose were approached differently, with the collective efforts of the peace movement's protests drawn upon as examples. In The Hague these included Ingeborg Drewitz's warning of the theme of peace becoming fashionable and the associated perils of such a status ('denn wie schnell kippen Moden um!'³⁰⁰) along with the more optimistic prognosis of Robert Jungk regarding the prevalence and effects of mass mobilisation in the name of peace: 'Wir erleben heute etwas, das kein Erdbeben, sondern ein Menschenbeben ist'.³⁰¹ Similarly, the discussion at Interlit '82 reinforces this positive perspective on popularly supported protest actions across the huge variety of contexts presented, from Western Europe to Japan and across the developing world. Additionally, these perspectives on active protesters are

²⁹⁹ Robert Jungk, in *Berliner Begegnung zur Friedensförderung: Protokolle des Schriftstellertreffens am 13./14. Dezember 1981*, p. 171.

³⁰⁰ Ingeborg Drewitz, in *'Es geht, es geht--'* ed. by Bernt Engelmann and others, p. 100.

³⁰¹ Robert Jungk, in *'Es geht, es geht--'* ed. by Bernt Engelmann and others, p. 108.

used to reinforce the influential roles examined in the previous section, as is demonstrated in Engelmann's perspective on influencing political opinion:

Sie können dazu nur gezwungen werden durch den millionenfachen, unüberhörbaren, sich ständig verstärkenden Protest der Massen. [...] Zu diesem Massenprotest und seinem Gelingen können wir Schriftsteller wesentlich beitragen.³⁰²

Altogether, the perspectives on protest and protesters within the four summits allow two main inferences to be made. Firstly, despite not being a huge factor in the two Berliner Begegnungen, the importance of mutual influence between the arguments made in mass protest actions and writers' discussions was greatly emphasised and demonstrated in the Haager Treffen and Interlit '82. Moreover, this influence was not simply defined as a by-product of these events taking place simultaneously, but rather was a key element of furthering these goals and fulfilling both individual and shared obligations – political and moral obligations on the part of protesters to be engaged with the running of their polities and pressing political issues through democratic processes and demonstrations where needed, and the positional obligations on the part of writers to help foster discussions and offer influence and encouragement to these others along the way. This was further supported by the fact that a number of the participants at each of the four summits had also participated in direct protest actions, and would continue to contribute in this way throughout the peace movement's action phase, as was seen in the previous chapter. Therefore, the themes of shared obligations and contributions

³⁰² Engelmann, 'Begrüßung der Teilnehmer im Namen des Verbandes deutscher Schriftsteller (VS) in der IG Druck und Papier', p. 170.

to a collective cause were strongly emphasised both through the arguments engaged with as part of the summits and wider demonstrations, and in the more direct factor of personal involvement with both on the part of a number of prominent figures.

Secondly, and related to these positional obligations, it is evident from these perspectives on protesters that the respective positions of engaged writers and mobilised protesters were presented as essentially parallel. Instead of one group directly influencing another in its approach to the theme of peace, or a proposal of a hierarchical structure defining relations between them, both protesters and writers are presented as holding their primary objectives and obligations to the furthering of the goal of peace and contributions to the peace movement. This attitude again reflects the direct involvement of writers in mass protest actions such as the Bonn and ‘Aktionswoche’ demonstrations, which demonstrated that membership of one group within the peace movement by no means precluded involvement in common activities with common goals. As the overview of the peace movement’s structure in Chapter 2 shows, this arrangement was a defining characteristic of the heterogeneous peace movement’s makeup, and it should come as no surprise that this extended to engaged writers as well.

Thus, the influence between groups should not be interpreted as that of mentors and mentees, or as an enlightened few preaching to the unwashed masses, but rather as two mutually assisting groups following common goals and wishing to contribute to a larger movement, both in terms of shared obligations and simultaneously held group memberships.

6.3. Outcomes

Following the structures, themes, and lines of argumentation put forward over the course of the four summits, the final element which needs to be considered lies in their closing stages and outcomes. As with the previous elements, these varied between the meetings, and in relation to the arguments involved. Furthermore, when compared to the aims set out for each of the meetings, a degree of their success can be seen in the ways in which consensus and further developments were met by the end of the proceedings.

For the first Berliner Begegnung, the attitude at the end of the summit can be seen in Hermlin's closing remarks, mirroring the opening:

Ich habe keine Bilanz zu ziehen und Zensuren zu verteilen. Ich möchte nur sagen, daß ich sehr froh bin über das, was sich seit gestern Abend oder Nachmittag bei uns ereignet hat.³⁰³

This closing statement with its acknowledged lack of a summary for or consensus from the Begegnung could be interpreted as a failure, or at least as an underwhelming conclusion to the summit in the sense that its various lines of discussion did not lead to any concrete declaration or outcome. However, Hermlin's subsequent, well-received call for further meetings closely following the Berliner Begegnung in order to continue what had begun there,³⁰⁴ coupled with the fact that this diverse, multifaceted discussion had taken place show that the general objective of the meeting had indeed been fulfilled. The symbolically important meeting in East Berlin had taken place, contact had been made between writers from East and West, discussions had been

³⁰³ Hermlin, p. 172.

³⁰⁴ Ibid., p. 173.

enthusiastically approached from a variety of viewpoints, and a degree of trust and cooperation had been established which provided a useful basis on which to build. By these measures, the 1981 Berliner Begegnung was a success under its own terms.

Following on from this, the aims of the Haager Treffen to continue this work and to produce a concrete declaration were also successful to a certain degree. Firstly, the fact that the meeting took place with an expanded approach to the issues of war and peace can be seen as a successful continuation on the trend set in Berlin. More importantly however for the goals set for the Haager Treffen, the attendees were able to reach a consensus in the form of the ‘Gemeinsame Erklärung’³⁰⁵ which fulfilled two important roles.

Firstly, the declaration reaffirms the participating writers’ place in a continuity of peace activism, both with the previous actions such as the Berliner Begegnung and Appell der Schriftsteller Europas and with the place of these figures as ‘Teil der internationalen Friedensbewegung’.³⁰⁶ These prominent public statements were particularly important in the context of the wider peace movement’s action phase, and show the active support of engaged writers in terms of fostering further public awareness and discussions with these appeals and the themes shared between them and the wider movement’s mass mobilised demonstrations, along with the simultaneous direct participation of many of the conferences’ prominent attendees in the protest actions examined in the previous chapter.

³⁰⁵ Engelmann, Hoffmann, and others, ‘Gemeinsame Erklärung der Teilnehmer am Haager Treffen vom 26. Mai 1982’, p. 133.

³⁰⁶ Ibid.

Secondly, the declaration ends on a more dramatic note with a call for the dissolution of both NATO and the Warsaw Pact in order to prevent further escalation of the Cold War tensions prevailing at the time. As was shown in the discussions regarding utopian and pragmatic thinking, this final section of the declaration was almost universally recognised as an unrealistic proposition, even by those in support of it, but the fact that it was made and that it was supported as a part of the shared declaration from the assembled participants remains an important statement of engagement and unity on the part of the conference attendees. While this proposition ultimately had limited influence on wider political discourse, the fact that it was made as a statement of purpose and that the assembled writers from across Europe and across the dividing lines of the Cold War could share their support for it in principle allowed it to act as an important point of symbolic unity.

As with the stated aims of the summit, this sense of symbolic unity and necessary roles and obligations of engaged writers within the peace movement was continued and expanded upon during the Interlit '82 summit, culminating in the 'Internationaler Schriftstellerappell an die Weltöffentlichkeit'.³⁰⁷ In addition to covering these points of unity and purpose along with further continuity with previous actions, this appeal expands the scope of the engaged individuals' obligations to a global scale, emphasising the importance of action around the world in a huge range of different contexts, and the roles of writers within it. In relation to appeals for concrete measures, this appeal moved from a call for the abolition of military blocs to the three related issues examined in Section 6.2.1., namely the removal of weapons of mass destruction, improved

³⁰⁷ Engelmann, Hoffmann, and others, 'Internationaler Schriftstellerappell an die Weltöffentlichkeit (Kölner Manifest '82)', p. 405.

international arbitration, and the establishment of free, peaceful living conditions for all people around the world.³⁰⁸

As with the conclusions of the Haager Treffen, it is clear that the goals of this appeal were at best long-term ones, and at worst utopian or entirely unrealistic, particularly within the bounds of a writers' summit. However, the fact that they were expressed and gave the assembled writers a sense of common purpose was important in itself, particularly with regards to the final lines of the appeal:

Wir verpflichten uns, mit ganzer Kraft für diese gemeinsamen Ziele und ihre Verbreitung einzutreten und uns allem zu verweigern, was ihnen widerspricht.³⁰⁹

This conception of writers' engagement shows a particularly active form of obligation. In contrast to many of the previously examined statements of engagement, which drew on implicit obligations as defining and justifying factors in the roles and engagement of writers, this appeal outlines an explicit, active obligation to act, both as a fulfilment of writers' critical roles, and as a central rhetorical tool in a public statement of support for the peace movement. Thus, the ultimate outcome of Interlit '82 and its Schriftstellerappell brings together the themes of common purpose and obligation, using both the positional obligations of writers and the moral obligations associated with the global reach of the peace movement and the threat against which it was directed in order to work towards common goals.

³⁰⁸ Engelmann, Hoffmann, and others, 'Internationaler Schriftstellerappell an die Weltöffentlichkeit (Kölner Manifest '82)', p.405.

³⁰⁹ Ibid., p. 406.

In contrast with the previous three summits, neither the general discussions which took place at the second Berliner Begegnung nor the closing stages of the summit had productive outcomes, or a common sense of purpose from the attendees. In addition to the lack of positive outcomes, many of the disputes which arose between participating writers remained unresolved by the end of the conference, which in turn obstructed the organisation of further events after 1983, thereby contributing to the effective end of the summit series, in line with the more general fragmentation and diversification of the wider peace movement in this period. However, this less than productive end to the second Berliner Begegnung did not mean that the event was a wasted effort, or that its discussions had amounted to nothing more than inconsequential bickering. Even the more confrontational arguments seen in this summit involved discussions of the roles and obligations of engaged writers, and shed particular light on the limitations of obligations as supporting elements for engagement, as the conflict between simultaneously held positional and moral obligations proved to be problematic for both individuals' definitions of their roles, and the efforts towards cohesive forms of collective engagement in relation to the wider peace movement.

6.4. Summary

In summary, what can be made of the four summits? For this, it is necessary to return to the overarching questions at the heart of this analysis, and therefore consider the importance of engaged writers' actions within the wider context of the peace movement, and the roles played by political, positional, and moral obligations in the establishment and execution of this engagement. With this in mind, five key points can be made.

Firstly, as is evident from the broad participation of writers from across the world over the course of these four summits, these events served to clearly establish a widely supported call for, and demonstration of, engagement in support of the peace movement both in West Germany and worldwide. This engagement was further defined as a supporting and contributing role to the wider peace movement, in a way which by no means subtracted from the importance of either writers or the mass mobilisation which underpinned other aspects of the movement, but rather placed these groups in parallel roles.

Secondly, in establishing these roles, the summits and the discussions within them consistently underlined the importance of obligations in relation to this engagement. This was established partly through the importance of obligations towards humanity as a whole, brought into sharp focus with the factor of universal threat requiring universal engagement and universal obligations, but also through more specialised and context-sensitive political, positional, and moral obligations, as has been shown across the varied lines of argumentation examined in this chapter. However, whether generalised or specific, these obligations remained a constant factor in calls to action and engagement, along with justifications for these roles, which were consistently framed not in terms of ‘because we can’ or ‘because we should’, but ‘because we *must*’. This was demonstrated in the expressions of common cause and the necessity of action in the face of common threats, but also in the more specific definitions of the roles of writers, along with the underlying moral and positional obligations to put these roles to use in support of the wider peace movement and its themes.

Thirdly, and related to this array of specialised obligations, the four summits were also defined by the diversity of individuals, contexts, and perspectives on obligations put forward by their participants. While obligation as a whole remained a constant factor in argumentation and engagement, no single set of obligations could be seen to define all the commitments put forward by participating writers. Many forms of engagement seen over the course of the four summits were defined and justified by particular roles and expectations of writers, which in many cases were supported by particular sets of obligations. As has been shown above, while some engaged individuals focussed on relatively direct political and social influence in representative or irritant roles, others placed more importance on abstract morality. The Interlit '82 conference in particular saw arguments for the importance of positional roles in local or national contexts, set against more general positional obligations of writers which transcended national borders. While the positions put forward show a variety of interpretations of engaged writers' roles and priorities, a common element can be found in the role of obligations in supporting these positions. Whether arguing for grounded realism or engagement with abstract ideals, the arguments across each of the summits commonly presented their positions as being a natural consequence of writers' core roles, abilities, and socio-political positions, all of which were defined and reinforced by a range of political, positional, and moral obligations.

Fourthly, and partially as a result of this multitude of perspectives and the clashes which occasionally resulted from these, it is evident that these obligations could also at times be problematic in their own right. While these differences were weathered more or less cohesively over the course of the first

three summits, the mutually held, overlapping and at times contradictory obligations proved to be particularly troublesome at the second Berliner Begegnung. This presented an obstacle for further discussion and engagement, and contributed to these conferences not seeing significant further development in the following years, but nonetheless did not reduce this final stage of the summit series to abject failure.

Finally, despite these problems, the single purpose of contributing to the peace movement overrode other factors, which not even the discord in the second Berliner Begegnung could destroy. As a result of three of the four summits achieving their stated aims, producing two common declarations (the Haager Treffen's *Gemeinsame Erklärung* and Interlit's *Kölner Manifest*) along with constructive, open discussion in all four, the summits can generally be considered to be successful, at least in terms of writers' engagement and contributions to the peace movement. While they may not have single-handedly created the utopia which was at times discussed, the importance of public engagement, common purpose, and the obligations underpinning them should not be underestimated, whether in relation to these summits or to the other contemporary actions contributing to the peace movement as a whole.

7. ‘Einigkeit der Einzelgänger’? Organisational engagement with the peace movement

Following the conferences analysed in the previous chapter, the more general theme of writers’ organisational involvement with the peace movement provides additional insight into the issues of engagement and obligation. A number of analysts of post-war German literature such as Helmut Peitsch³¹⁰ and Ralf Schnell³¹¹ identify this organisational engagement as one of the defining characteristics of the West German literary field in the early 1980s, with the Verband deutscher Schriftsteller (VS), one of the Federal Republic’s foremost writers’ organisations, at the forefront of these developments. This chapter focusses primarily on the role of the VS in relation to the engagement of writers with the peace movement within an organisational framework.

As in the previous case study chapters, the activities of the VS should not be seen as entirely representative of all forms of organisational engagement relating to writers and the peace movement. This term encompasses a range of groups, many of which involved contributions from engaged writers, even if their focus was not necessarily on the roles and obligations of these figures. However, my thesis cannot include a complete examination of all instances of organisational contributions to the peace movement in this period, as a comparative analysis of each of these forms of engagement would be an extensive project in itself.

³¹⁰ Peitsch, *Nachkriegsliteratur 1945-1989*, p. 289.

³¹¹ Ralf Schnell, *Die Literatur der Bundesrepublik*, p. 304.

The first of these organisational structures which could be investigated in terms of the roles and contributions of engaged writers lies in the range of locally and regionally organised citizens' initiatives which formed a key part of the support and mobilisation of the peace movement and other causes such as the ecological and anti-nuclear movements in this period. However, while these forms of organisational engagement were instrumental in the development of the peace movement, analyses such as Thomas Ohlemacher's *Brücken der Mobilisierung*³¹² highlight two factors which render a direct analysis of engaged writers' roles within these organisational frameworks problematic. Firstly, the range of citizens' initiatives which arose across the Federal Republic in this period were particularly heterogeneous in terms of structures, goals, and mobilisation, meaning that any generalisations regarding the roles and contributions of engaged writers in this context which could be made in this chapter would be of limited use.³¹³ Secondly, the nature of these initiatives as decentralised and locally oriented often precluded the existence of specific roles for engaged writers, with the social context in which these initiatives developed taking precedence over established external roles.³¹⁴ While this attitude reinforces the role of engagement as ordinary citizens examined previously, this non-specific opportunity for individuals' engagement provides limited insight into the issue organisational engagement on which this chapter focuses.

³¹² Thomas Ohlemacher, *Brücken der Mobilisierung: Soziale Relais und persönliche Netzwerke in Bürgerinitiativen gegen militärischen Tiefflug* (Wiesbaden: Deutscher Universitätsverlag, 2013).

³¹³ Ibid., p. 27.

³¹⁴ Ibid., p. 136.

Direct engagement with protest groups is similarly problematic with regards to analysis of writers' engagement within organisational frameworks, as was examined in Chapter 5. While individual writers made a number of important contributions to protest actions and often worked in close cooperation with the groups which organised them such as the 1981 Bonn demonstration and 1983 'Prominentenblockade', their status was primarily as somewhat independent agents and outsiders lending their support to the events, rather than as integral members of specific protest organisations.

A further instance of organisational engagement which concerns a primarily outsider status for engaged writers can be found in the involvement of these figures with political parties. While figures such as Günter Grass, Hans Werner Richter, and Dieter Lattmann had been heavily involved with the SPD beginning in the 1960s, attitudes towards close cooperation between writers and politicians became steadily less positive over the course of the 1970s, to the point where figures such as Lattmann who retained their SPD connections were in a minority by the 1980s. While writers' political organisational engagement also included involvement with less mainstream parties such as the Greens, these roles were also somewhat problematic in the context of the 1980s. While a number of West German writers such as Carl Amery and Herbert Gruhl were deeply involved with both the principles and the organisation of the Green Party, its unique status as a 'paradox between movement and party'³¹⁵ again leads to issues of generalising writers' roles within organisational frameworks, and a focussed analysis of writers' engagement with the Greens goes beyond the scope of this project. Therefore,

³¹⁵ *The German Greens: Paradox between Movement and Party*, ed. by Margit Mayer and John Ely (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1998).

while writers' engagement with political parties is a complex and multi-faceted issue, even in the less favourable political context of the 1980s, this chapter focuses on organisational frameworks which provide more clearly defined roles and obligations for engaged writers.

This clearer organisational framework is to be found in organisations specifically focussed on writers' activities such as the Verband deutscher Schriftsteller. However, the VS was by no means the only writers' organisation with active influence in the Federal Republic. In the context of writers and political engagement in the post-war period, the Gruppe 47, the PEN also stand out as particularly influential. However, in the context of the peace movement in the 1980s, the VS gives the clearest insight into the developments and obligations of organisational engagement. For the Gruppe 47, the simple fact that the organisation was disbanded in 1977 precludes any form of organisational engagement with the peace movement during the final stages of the Cold War. Although many of its members such as Böll and Grass remained active throughout the period in question, the organisation itself did not play a role in these developments.

As for the PEN, Peitsch's analysis of the organisation in the post-war period shows that the question of direct engagement in the context of the Cold War was rendered inherently problematic due to the PEN's international makeup and aversion to partisan politics, leading to a deliberate distancing of the organisation from these issues.³¹⁶ Instead, Peitsch shows that the international organisation and the West German PEN in particular focussed on

³¹⁶ Helmut Peitsch, *'No Politics'?: Die Geschichte des Deutschen PEN-Zentrums in London 1933-2002* (Göttingen: V&R Unipress, 2006), p. 302.

the concept of 'Akademisierung als Ausweg' from this problem, with the general principle of anti-totalitarian engagement with strong ties to the organisation's historical opposition to the Nazi regime forming a critical part of the organisation's self-definition.³¹⁷ This is not to say however that the PEN was entirely inactive in this period, as this chapter's examination of engagement in relation to the Poland crisis will demonstrate.

While these other instances of organisational engagement provide a range of writers' roles and obligations across a broad range of contexts, this chapter focusses on the VS as a specific writers' organisation because it provides a range of relevant examples of organisational engagement with particular emphasis on the professional context of writers' interest representation and trade union frameworks, all of which provide relevant insight into the specific issue of writers' organisational engagement with the peace movement in the 1980s, and the roles and obligations involved in this undertaking.

In addition to being the main driving force behind the Interlit '82 conference analysed in the previous chapter, the VS was heavily involved with the peace movement in West Germany and beyond in a variety of ways throughout the period in question. This form of engagement was far from unusual for the VS, which had since its formation in 1969 emphasised two key principles, as outlined in the inaugural writers' congress: Firstly, that writers' key position within democratic society, particularly in the case of West Germany, by definition included active participation and engagement with

³¹⁷ Peitsch, *'No Politics'?*, p. 322.

socio-political issues.³¹⁸ Secondly, the VS as an organisation structured itself along the lines of – in Heinrich Böll’s phrasing – ‘die Einigkeit der Einzelgänger’,³¹⁹ meaning that while the organisation as a whole aimed to unify and represent where possible the interests and dispositions of its constituent members, the independence of these members as well as their capacity for individual forms of engagement or non-engagement was also to be respected. While this attitude draws on general theories of writers’ critical distance and the concept of ‘freischwebende Intelligenz’³²⁰, the idea of engaged writers as solitary figures holds particular importance for Böll. As Frank Finlay argues, Böll saw the Gruppe 47’s mainstream success and effective institutionalisation over the course of the 1950s and 1960s as an obstacle to meaningful engagement, meaning that ‘ein Schriftsteller, der funktioniert, ist keiner mehr’.³²¹ Therefore, despite the VS differing greatly in terms of organisational structure and aims from the Gruppe 47, this advocacy for an established position along the lines of ‘Einigkeit der Einzelgänger’ outlines the importance of a semi-autonomous structure for organisational engagement on the part of the VS. While the VS established a more formal structure and system of membership compared to the Gruppe 47, its codification of semi-autonomous engagement served to reinforce a key positional obligation for

³¹⁸ *Einigkeit der Einzelgänger Dokumentation des 1. Schriftstellerkongresses des Verbands Deutscher Schriftsteller (VS)*, ed. by Dieter Lattmann (Munich: Kindler, 1971), p. 119.

³¹⁹ Lattmann, *Einigkeit der Einzelgänger Dokumentation des 1. Schriftstellerkongresses des Verbands Deutscher Schriftsteller (VS)*, p. 20.

³²⁰ Karl Mannheim, *Ideologie und Utopie*. (Frankfurt am Main: Klostermann, 1995), p. 138.

³²¹ Frank Finlay, “‘Ein Schriftsteller, der funktioniert, ist keiner mehr’: Heinrich Böll and the Gruppe 47”, in *The Gruppe 47, Fifty Years on: A Re-Appraisal of Its Literary and Political Significance*, ed. by K. Stuart Parkes and others, German Monitor, no. 45 (Amsterdam; Atlanta, GA: Rodopi, 1999), p. 122.

engaged writers to take on independent positions, which allowed them to retain their critical distance and fulfil their critical roles in relation to social and political issues.

With these founding principles in mind, this chapter aims to address two key questions. Firstly, this chapter will examine the extent to which these concepts of de facto engagement and ‘Einigkeit der Einzelgänger’ still applied to the involvement of the VS with the West German peace movement in the period between 1979 and 1985, drawing particularly on the expected roles of engaged writers. Secondly, and more importantly for the purposes of my thesis as a whole, this chapter will analyse the influence of these principles, their recognition, and implementation on the range of obligations underpinning the engagement of the VS and its members in this period. These include political and positional obligations tied directly to the structure of the organisation and the relation between its members and leadership, along with more general positional and moral obligations concerning engaged writers’ roles and relation to social and political issues, particularly in terms of critical detachment and the extent of their engagement.

7.1. The Verband deutscher Schriftsteller and the peace movement

7.1.1. The VS, writers and politics

The first area in which the question of the engagement of the VS and its members in relation to the West German peace movement in the late 1970s and early 1980s can be analysed lies in the positions of the organisation over the course of this period in relation to politics and the peace movement. Perhaps surprisingly given the close involvement of the organisation with the themes of

war and peace, and involvement of its members with protest actions, the ties between the VS and the wider peace movement in this period were not particularly well established, either on the part of the VS or leading organisations within the wider peace movement. Instead, the primary lines of engagement which were emphasised by the VS were much more concerned with the political sphere and the topics of war, peace, and disarmament, rather than direct engagement with the peace movement itself at an organisational level.

From the original founding of the VS, providing support for its members and their ability to engage with and influence discussions on social and political issues was strongly emphasised as one of the organisation's central roles. This theme was at the forefront of proceedings in the first conference of the VS in 1970, which was opened not only by a welcoming statement from President Gustav Heinemann emphasising the mutual support and benefit between 'Ihre Arbeit und Ihre Aufgabe als Schriftsteller' and the rest of society,³²² but also by a longer speech delivered by Chancellor Willy Brandt, entitled 'Braucht die Politik den Schriftsteller?' The main themes of this speech and its implications for the engagement of the VS and writers in general are twofold. Firstly, Brandt emphasises the common ground between politicians and writers, both in terms of the use of language being the 'Handwerkzeug' and basis of both groups' expertise and influence,³²³ and in the mutual influence of literature and politics on each other and the society around them:

³²² Lattmann, *Einigkeit der Einzelgänger Dokumentation des 1. Schriftstellerkongresses des Verbands Deutscher Schriftsteller (VS)*, p. 7.

³²³ *Ibid.*, p. 14.

Geist und Macht, das angeblich strenge Gegensatzpaar, üben oft und gerne Rollentausch. Denn so mächtig der Einfluß der Politik auf die Gesellschaft sein mag, längst hat sie ihre Macht teilen müssen: gerade Sie als Schriftsteller sollten Ihren Einfluß nicht unterschätzen.³²⁴

This attitude on the shared tools, along with the importance of writers' engagement in West Germany was also expressed by the members of the VS, generally sharing Brandt's conclusions on the benefits of mutual influence between writers and politics. Furthermore, this perspective on common ground between the two groups was reinforced by the fact that Brandt's participation was by no means a unique occurrence, building on the 'Prozeß der Politisierung' of West German literature throughout the early and mid-1960s, based on a 'Neubestimmung der Rolle und Aufgaben des Schriftstellers' with increased emphasis on engagement in terms of direct critique of culture, politics and society in the Federal Republic,³²⁵ as well as the more individual involvement of Brandt himself with engaged literature in general and figures such as Günter Grass in particular, whose involvement with both the SPD and VS, along with personal connections with Brandt served to further emphasise the diminishing of inherently oppositional or exclusive relations between writers and politics in this period.³²⁶ Again building on this increasing emphasis on the critical role of writers in relation to political power which developed further during the 1960s, additional positional obligations for both

³²⁴ Lattmann, *Einigkeit der Einzelgänger*, p. 12.

³²⁵ Matthias Uecker, 'Aufrufe, Bekenntnisse, Analysen: zur Politisierung der westdeutschen Literatur in den sechziger Jahren', in *Counter-Cultures in Germany and Central Europe: From Sturm und Drang to Baader-Meinhof*, ed. by Steve Giles and Maike Oergel (Oxford; New York: P. Lang, 2003), p. 288.

³²⁶ *Willy Brandt-Günter Grass: Der Briefwechsel*, ed. by Martin Köbel (Göttingen: Steidl, 2013), p. 398.

individual writers and the VS as an engaged organisation were put forward in support of democratic ideals and speaking out in their defence where necessary, as Dieter Lattmann posited:

Der VS ist jedenfalls nicht gegründet worden, um bestehende Verhältnisse zu akzeptieren. Er versteht sich als eine organisatorische Kraft, die demokratisch gesteckte Ziele verfolgt – auf provozierende Weise: nämlich pragmatisch und progressiv in einem.³²⁷

With this assessment, three observations can be made regarding the position of the VS in relation to organisational political engagement and the forms of obligation relating to it in this early period of the organisation's existence.

Firstly, the agreement over the importance of political influence and engagement expressed both in Brandt's speech and VS members' contributions to the conference reveals a sense of perceived common ground between politicians and writers and the respective responsibilities of each group in the context of the late 1960s and early 1970s, or at the very least, a desire by figures within each group for this to be the case. This was particularly evident in Lattmann's own position as both the first chair of the VS and as a member of parliament for the SPD, with the two roles held simultaneously between 1972 and 1974. Although Lattmann's dual status was more of an exception than the rule for writers and politicians in this period, the open exchange between the two groups remained a priority, even for the majority of

³²⁷ Lattmann, *Einigkeit der Einzelgänger Dokumentation des 1. Schriftstellerkongresses des Verbands Deutscher Schriftsteller (VS)*, p. 120.

individuals involved who positioned themselves exclusively within one group or the other.

Secondly, the framing of writers' political engagement as necessarily being within the established frameworks of West German politics presents simultaneous political obligations for writers in the VS to exert influence within these structures, without necessarily abandoning their critical distance or judgement through unconditional support or direct involvement in party politics. In particular, the non-acceptance of established structures can be seen to reinforce the expected role and associated positional obligations of engaged writers to fulfil a critical, irritant function in political discourses, using the status and positional abilities as prominent figures to ask uncomfortable questions and generally maintain a provocative, or even at times antagonistic relationship with established state power.

Thirdly, Lattmann's particular emphasis on pragmatism and progressivism demonstrates that the debates between pragmatic and idealistic thinking seen at the highpoint of the peace movement's protest activity and writers' involvement with it such as the Interlit summit examined in the previous chapter were in evidence from the beginning of writers' organisational engagement within the VS. The importance of the VS remaining pragmatic and effectively neutral in terms of party politics reveals a key positional obligation in its organisational engagement. Although this sense of common ground was overwhelmingly focussed on politicians in the SPD with very few comparable ties to figures in the CDU, DKP, or other parties, the rhetoric expressing common ground and mutual influence was concerned more with general political involvement rather than specific partisan support.

Moreover, these critical roles are put forward as obligations for the organisation's engagement in political affairs, regardless of partisan concerns or the personal affiliations of its members, including Lattmann himself. While this sets out an inclusive framework for supporting writers in fulfilling critical roles, this position also set up the possibility of conflict between personal and organisational obligations on the part of VS members; a factor which became particularly problematic in the 1980s.

This perception of common ground and common purpose between writers and politicians did not last into the highpoint of peace movement activities in the 1980s. This change was brought about partly as a result of developments regarding the perceived roles of writers and political engagement over the course of the turbulent 1970s including the *Sympathisantendebatte*, in which prominent writers among others were accused of symbolically supporting terrorism within the Federal Republic³²⁸ with contributions to public discussions such as Heinrich Böll's 1972 *Spiegel* article 'Will Ulrike Gnadé oder freies Geleit?'³²⁹ and partly due to a political climate which was decidedly less welcoming towards writers' contributions to public discourse under the administrations of Helmut Schmidt and later Helmut Kohl. This second factor developed to the point of outright hostility on the part of certain political figures such as the CSU chairman Franz Josef Strauß and secretary general Edmund Stoiber, including an infamous description by Strauß in 1978 of leftist politically engaged writers as 'Ratten

³²⁸ Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft, *Schriftsteller als Intellektuelle: Politik und Literatur im Kalten Krieg*, Studien und Texte zur Sozialgeschichte der Literatur, Bd. 73 (Tübingen: M. Niemeyer, 2000), p. 3.

³²⁹ Heinrich Böll, 'Will Ulrike Gnadé oder freies Geleit?', *Der Spiegel*, 1972, 3 edn, pp. 54–57.

und Schmeißfliegen’.³³⁰ As a result of all this, the discussion of writers’ engagement and influence in politics had developed in a much more hostile environment over the course of the 1970s, and had taken on a drastically different tone by the end of the decade. This can be seen in the fifth VS conference in 1980, with Dieter Lattmann making explicit reference to Willy Brandt’s speech in the first:

Das geistig-politische Klima, in dem diese Äußerung sich als selbstverständlich ausnahm, gehört der Vergangenheit an. Wer das Damals mit dem Heute vergleicht, ermißt die Verengungen, die in den zehn Jahren fast überall in der Bundesrepublik durch die Gegenreformation ausgelöst wurden.³³¹

This position was widely supported by other members of the VS in this conference, including the chairman of the IG Druck und Papier Leonhard Mahlein, who appealed for ‘Solidarität in der Bewährung’ in the face of open opposition from politicians such as Strauß and Stoiber,³³² and Heinrich Böll, whose reminder of his colleagues’ positions as ‘freie Bürger der Bundesrepublik Deutschland’ with their associated rights and obligations was coupled with an additional plea not to become ‘Freiwild der Demagogen’.³³³

This changed political situation from the late 1960s reinforced the conception of oppositional groups of writers and politicians, leading to an increased sense of the need for solidarity among the members of the VS,

³³⁰ ‘Das deutsche Wort’, *Der Spiegel*, 1980, 9 edn, pp. 29–33 (p. 29).

³³¹ Verband deutscher Schriftsteller, *Bestandsaufnahme: V. Schriftstellerkongress VS*, ed. by Bernt Engelmann (Munich: Goldmann, 1980), p. 237.

³³² *Ibid.*, p. 190.

³³³ *Ibid.*, p. 36.

although without necessarily detracting from the importance of political engagement or writers' positional obligations. Instead, these engagements and obligations are framed differently, moving on from the ideal of collaborative and mutually influential efforts between writers and politics, into a more oppositional critical role, aided by a further positional obligation for writers within the VS in particular to support one another in the face of external opposition.

Despite this shift in the forms of engagement, the links between the VS and the wider peace movement remained as nebulous in 1980 as they had been a decade previously, and attempts to replace these political links with direct engagement with protest groups and protest politics were not in evidence in the 1980 VS conference. This stance continued throughout the highpoint of the peace movement's activity in West Germany, with engagement on the part of VS members occurring on a predominantly individual basis. Paradoxically, this arrangement was made particularly clear with the inclusion of Oskar Lafontaine as a speaker at the 1984 VS congress, who emphasised the independent nature of the movement:

Auch wir diskutieren bei uns, wie es weitergehen soll mit der Friedensbewegung. Und dabei müssen wir achtgeben, daß ein Prinzip der Friedensbewegung durchgehalten wird. Und dieses Prinzip war von Anfang an, daß niemand versuchen soll, sie für sich zu vereinnahmen. Keine Partei!³³⁴

³³⁴ *Ein Dialog zwischen Blinden und Taubstummen: Der Kongress des Verbands Deutscher Schriftsteller 1984 in Saarbrücken: Eine Dokumentation,*

This speech highlights the distinction between the audience of VS members and 'wir' in the SPD, with both groups considering their positions in relation to the peace movement reinforces the conception of these groups retaining their independence from one another, while at the same time Lafontaine's invitation to and participation in the VS event shows a degree of cooperation and amicable relationship between members of each.

Moreover, Lafontaine's position as an outsider to the VS is further reinforced by the resistance to the peace movement being co-opted by other organisations. Although the emphasis on 'keine Partei!' refers primarily to the involvement of political parties, and is followed by a more detailed elaboration of how the agendas of parties such as the SPD, the Greens, and the DKP would harm the peace movement if allowed to take over, the statement of resistance to a single organisation taking over the peace movement, even at the tail end of its highpoint of activity in this period, applied equally to writers' organisations, and served to further discourage the prospect of organisational support for the peace movement by the VS as a whole in an official capacity. This therefore further reinforces the conceptions of critical distance examined in Chapter 4's analysis of writers' expected roles, in the sense that even when acting within an organisational framework such as the VS, the independence and outsider status of engaged writers remained paramount in their contributions to the peace movement along with any other forms of public engagement undertaken.

Finally, and despite this emphasis on an independent peace movement which could appear to be almost hostile to the involvement of the VS,

Lafontaine's participation in the VS congress and later mention of specific instances of amicable cooperation with individuals such as having 'die Ehre' of writing a foreword to one of Günter Grass's books highlights a much more open attitude towards the involvement of writers and the peace movement on an individual basis.³³⁵ Thus, Lafontaine's attitude displayed in the 1984 congress mirrored the general position of the VS itself, seeming to resist the potentially dominating influence of organisational involvement, while remaining open to and indeed encouraging mutual influence and individual engagement.

7.1.2. Representation in the VS

Following on from the relative positions of writers, politics, and the peace movement, the internal priorities and developments of the VS in this period require further analysis. While shying away from official organisational engagement with the peace movement, a renewed emphasis was placed on writers' engagement on their own terms, with the VS aiming to provide a network of support and solidarity for its individually engaged or non-engaged members. However, much like the political situation for the VS, the nature of this support, along with the representative capacity of the organisation to provide it underwent distinct changes between the founding of the VS and the early 1980s, to the point where the continued validity and even the basic legitimacy of the organisation were called into question.

Much like the involvement with political and social issues, the question of the representative capacity of the VS was put forward as a fundamental element of the organisation's purpose from its inception. This is highlighted

³³⁵ Schock, Behringer and Schmidt-Fehringer, p. 69.

most prominently with the two slogans effectively adopted by the VS, both originally articulated by Heinrich Böll: ‘Ende der Bescheidenheit’³³⁶ and ‘Einigkeit der Einzelgänger’.³³⁷ While both of these mottos put forward particular expectations for the bearing of individual writers as members of the VS, their meaning was equally important for the representative status of the organisation itself. With the prospect of an ‘Ende der Bescheidenheit’, particularly in relation to the potential backlash against authors taking public positions and engaging with potentially controversial topics, a degree of support and collective representation is implied, allowing members of the writers’ organisation to take risks which could otherwise have been impossible if acting on a purely individual basis. This therefore supports the concept of a privileged position for engaged writers, or at least a protected status which could allow these figures to more effectively influence debates over social and political issues, and with it a positional obligation on the part of writers to put this status to good use and fulfil their expected critical roles through their public engagement.

At the same time, however, the term ‘Einigkeit der Einzelgänger’ acknowledges the unique positional obligations tied to the specific roles taken on by engaged writers, with the retention of individuality within the organisation. The structure of the VS was established with a membership of individual writers, all of whom were free to remain independent, but through their participation in the organisation allowed the VS to represent their interests and endeavours. As such, the representative capacity of the

³³⁶ Heinrich Böll, *Ende der Bescheidenheit: Schriften und Reden, 1969-1972*, Schriften und Reden, 4 (Munich: Deutscher Taschenbuch, 1985), p. 12.

³³⁷ Lattmann, *Einigkeit der Einzelgänger Dokumentation des 1. Schriftstellerkongresses des Verbands Deutscher Schriftsteller (VS)*, p. 19.

organisation was from the beginning defined in democratic terms, with a system of political obligations laid out between the members of the organisation to participate and support its representative function, complemented by reciprocal political obligations on the part of the VS leadership to use this support to adequately represent the interests of these members. With this, as Dieter Lattmann argued in the inaugural conference in 1969, the structure of the VS was inherently committed to democratic processes, encouraging ‘den fortschreitenden Prozeß, der das Ziel aller ernsthaften Bestrebungen nach Demokratisierung ist’, both in the organisation’s engagement with external social and political issues, and in the structure of the organisation itself.³³⁸

With this established, some important limitations were placed on the representative capacity of the VS. While the organisation strongly encouraged social and political engagement on the part of its members, very little mention was made of any prescribed directions for this engagement, aside from the broadest terms of fostering democratic ideals and opposing ‘alles Totalitäre und die Fortsetzung politischen Handelns mit Mitteln der Gewalt’.³³⁹ This applied to the engagement of individual members with the peace movement, but also to involvement with other causes such as party politics. In either case, the representative role put forward by the VS was to support its members and their rights both as writers and as citizens, but not to dictate how this engagement or the positional obligations underlying it should be interpreted.³⁴⁰

³³⁸ Lattmann, *Einigkeit der Einzelgänger Dokumentation des 1. Schriftstellerkongresses des Verbands Deutscher Schriftsteller (VS)*, p. 120.

³³⁹ Ibid.

³⁴⁰ Ibid.

A similar principle also applied to members' writing. Although the VS was established as an organisation for all West German writers, and its membership was described by Bernt Engelmann as including 'nahezu alle bundesdeutschen Autoren und Übersetzer von Rang' by 1980,³⁴¹ the VS did not claim to represent West German literature as a whole, nor did it intend to dictate topics, styles or forms of writing to its members, whose 'Meinungsfreiheit' and independent work were strongly defended.³⁴² Instead, the main representative focus of the organisation in terms of creative works was placed on the legal rights of creators, particularly in relation to publishers and broadcasters, depending on the medium in which their works were created.³⁴³ The respective positional obligations for the organisation and its members were therefore established in somewhat neutral terms, with the latter taking on an obligation to be active in a literary sense and the former having an obligation to protect the right to do so, without either having to follow a particular directive or take on a particular position. This is further strengthened by the stated union-like structure, which reinforces the importance of collective representation within the VS, even while the organisation did not officially operate with a union structure until its entrance into the Industriegewerkschaft Druck und Papier in 1973.³⁴⁴

These supportive representative functions of the VS remained important for the organisation through to the 1980s. However, over the course

³⁴¹ Verband deutscher Schriftsteller, p. 9.

³⁴² Lattmann, *Einigkeit der Einzelgänger Dokumentation des 1. Schriftstellerkongresses des Verbands Deutscher Schriftsteller (VS)*, p. 81.

³⁴³ Ibid., p. 74.

³⁴⁴ *40 Jahre Verband deutscher Schriftsteller 1969-2009 (Berlin, 2009)*, ed. by Heinrich Bleicher-Nagelsmann (Berlin: Verband deutscher Schriftsteller, 2009), p. 16.

of the development of the VS in this period, the issue of taking on a trade union structure came to the fore, which raised further questions of the ability and means of the organisation to adequately represent its members, along with implications for the underlying obligations on the parts of both its members and leadership, and eventually questions over the basic legitimacy of the organisation as a whole. In relation to this issue, two further cases must be considered, namely the general positions and development of trade unions in the Federal Republic, and the perspectives on trade union status within the VS over the course of its own development.

Excellent overviews can be found in Helga Grebing's *History of the German Labour Movement*³⁴⁵ and Dieter Schuster's *Die Deutsche Gewerkschaftsbewegung*,³⁴⁶ both of which outline a number of key principles by which the trade union movement organised its development in post-war West German society. While it is not my aim to provide a similarly comprehensive analysis of this subject or the position of the Verband deutscher Schriftsteller in relation to wider developments in the trade union movement, an examination of these developments and parallels in the structure of the VS will prove useful in providing an insight into the representative structure of the organisation.

The first of these issues concerns the ideological positioning of the West German trade union movement. Starting in the aftermath of the Second World War and setting the tone for further developments from there, Grebing

³⁴⁵ Helga Grebing, *The History of the German Labour Movement: A Survey*, Rev. edn (Leamington Spa, Warwickshire; Dover, N.H., USA: Berg Publishers, 1985).

³⁴⁶ Dieter Schuster, *Die deutsche Gewerkschaftsbewegung*, ed. by DGB-Bundesvorstand, 6th edn (Cologne: Druckhaus Deutz GmbH).

notes that the driving principle for both trade unions and West Germany as a whole was reconstruction – a task which, for trade unions at least, was ‘of such magnitude that there was hardly time to pause to consider fundamental structural social changes’.³⁴⁷ Additionally, this sense of necessary pragmatism also served to undermine the ‘virtually revolutionary socialist spirit of the unions’³⁴⁸ which had characterised previous movements in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, both in terms of the unions’ relation to the state, and within the trade union movement itself.

In addition to this pragmatism in relation to societal positioning and status, a similar trend towards pragmatic political attitudes is also identified. While the inclusive and supportive role within West German society was reinforced by commitments to support the ‘freiheitlich-demokratischen Grundordnung der Bundesrepublik Deutschland’ and ‘die Sicherung und den Ausbau des sozialen Rechtsstaates und die weitere Demokratisierung von Wirtschaft, Staat und Gesellschaft’,³⁴⁹ a clear dividing line was drawn between this general form of political engagement and party politics. As Grebing shows, while ‘the unions’ political aims tend traditionally to correspond more closely to those of the SPD than those of the CDU/CSU’, this did not translate into full support for the former party or opposition to the latter in either official or unofficial roles.³⁵⁰ However, this aversion to party politics should not be seen as an avoidance of all forms of political engagement, as Grebing elaborates:

³⁴⁷ Grebing, p. 175.

³⁴⁸ Ibid.

³⁴⁹ Schuster, p. 83.

³⁵⁰ Grebing, p. 179.

The party-political independence of the trade unions is often wrongly held to imply the need for complete political abstention. The unions have in fact opposed the policies of the government and of the parties represented in the government on fundamental issues such as re-armament, the German army's use of atomic weapons, and emergency powers legislation. But in no instance have they attacked the constitutional order, much less advocated opposition against the state; they have in fact become politically effective within the framework of a free and democratic system.³⁵¹

Thus, the forms of political engagement put forward in relation to the trade union movement at the beginning of the post-war period and in the DGB's founding can be seen to have continued through the history of the Federal Republic in a somewhat similar fashion to the Verband deutscher Schriftsteller and many of its own politically engaged members. This is primarily evident in the generally critical role and corresponding positional obligations put forward in relation to the state and society of the Federal Republic for both the DGB and VS, defining their forms of political engagement as corrective influences, but also in terms of the limits of these obligations in relation to party politics. While individual members of both organisations remained free to maintain personal links and to engage publicly in support of or in opposition to any of the political parties in the Federal Republic, the political obligations of both the DGB and VS were characterised from their respective beginnings by a focus on general political engagement

³⁵¹ Grebing, p. 181.

within the frameworks of democratic society, without the possibility of organisational engagement along particular party lines.

The question of pragmatism also featured heavily in the second major issue shared by the VS and the trade union movement in this period, namely the issue of representation. As with the forms of political engagement and position in relation to the rest of society, the main objective in this regard focussed on providing practical support and means of collective bargaining rather than attempting to further all interests of writers in all aspects of West German politics and society. This can be found in the aforementioned waning of revolutionary attitudes within the trade union movement, but also in the founding principles of the VS, as is exemplified in Heinrich Böll's plea for the representative focus of the organisation at its founding in 1969, with a focus on the 'gesellschaftspolitischen Situation der Schriftsteller in der Bundesrepublik' based on the ability of independent writers to earn a living.³⁵²

The issues of representation and having a voice in political and social discussions are presented as important in relation to the formation of the VS, but not in the same capacity as many of the forms of individual political engagement seen elsewhere in the period. Instead of seeking to fulfil the roles and positional obligations of critical writers through involvement in public discourses, the defining features of organisational engagement put forward in this context emphasise the pragmatic concerns of ensuring that these roles could be taken on in the first place, through the defence of authors' rights and positions in relation to negotiations over publishing and royalties, or, in Böll's

³⁵² Böll, p. 56.

blunter terms, ‘wie wir unser Geld verdienen’.³⁵³ Although this is presented as simply ‘einen Aspekt unserer Arbeit’³⁵⁴ rather than the only relevant issue for discussion, and Böll’s contribution to the discussion was far from the only relevant argument, the general sense of pragmatism in the organisation’s representative capacity remained an important factor in the early development of the VS.

As the VS developed however, the questions of representation between the organisation and its members grew somewhat more complex, particularly with the inclusion of the organisation into the Industriegewerkschaft Druck und Papier. By the end of the 1970s and early 1980s, one final parallel emerged between the development of the VS and the trade union movement in the Federal Republic, with the criticism expressed in Grebing’s analysis:

An even more serious problem is the trade unions’ obvious tendency to become too bureaucratic; this leads to a growing divergence of interests between the leaders and the led, and means that members find it increasingly difficult to make their voice heard at the top.³⁵⁵

While the divergence of roles within the VS never became quite as distinct as the divide between professional bureaucrats and ordinary labourers in the trade unions analysed by Grebing, the central questions of democratic representation and the extent to which members’ interests were upheld by the organisation’s leadership remained pressing. A particular problem centred on the public engagement of the VS and the respective obligations for its

³⁵³ Böll, p. 64.

³⁵⁴ Ibid.

³⁵⁵ Grebing, p. 183.

members, leadership and the organisation as a whole came to the fore in the early 1980s, and defined an internal crisis in the organisation.

7.2. Internal conflicts

7.2.1. The peace movement and VS crises

The ideals, function, and obligations involved in the VS from its founding and through shifting political environs came into play in a very different way during the early 1980s. It is by no means an overstatement to refer to this period as a crisis, given that it led to a number of major changes in the organisation with reconsiderations of policy and numerous resignations, eventually including the entire board of directors, as well as the term ‘Krise im VS’ being used by the organisation’s own chronicles, both at the time³⁵⁶ and in retrospect.³⁵⁷ Occurring in the early 1980s, it is interesting to note that while the peace movement and a number of engaged writers on an individual basis were in their most active period, the organisational engagement of the VS was in some cases hampered by internal conflicts, and at others such as its involvement with protests and writers in Eastern Europe was problematic in its own right. While more comprehensive analyses of the crisis within the VS have been undertaken, such as the aforementioned examination of the 1984 VS conference in Saarbrücken by Ralf Schock, Klaus Behringer and Uschi Schmidt-Fehringer, and the history of the organisation as a whole edited by Heinrich Bleicher-Nagelsmann, this section focusses on the effect of obligations, representation, and the issue of legitimacy over the course of the development of this crisis.

³⁵⁶ Schock, Behringer and Schmidt-Fehringer, p.1.

³⁵⁷ Bleicher-Nagelsmann, p. 18.

While the crisis itself is depicted as having developed between 1981 and 1984 by the VS,³⁵⁸ the analysis of Schock et al. shows these dates were not as absolute as they may have appeared. For instance, while a great deal of emphasis is placed on the Saarbrücken conference as the climactic event of the crisis as a whole, the key events including the resignation of Bernt Engelmann along with the rest of the VS board of directors had already occurred several months previously, leaving the conference itself to deal mostly with the aftermath of these events and discussions of future directions for the organisation.³⁵⁹ Additionally, the starting point of the crisis can arguably be placed further back than 1981, as can be seen in the analysis of Bernt Engelmann's influence as the chairman of the VS starting in 1977:

In seinen friedenspolitischen Bemühungen trat er in direkten Kontakt mit dem Schriftstellerverband der DDR. Man suchte seit Mitte der siebziger Jahre nach Möglichkeiten, die Konfrontation zwischen Ost und West abzubauen. [...] Seit Beginn der achtziger Jahre hatte sich ein Streit darüber entfacht, wie mit den aus der DDR ausgewiesenen Autoren umzugehen sei, und wie es der Verband mit den Ansätzen einer Reformpolitik in Osteuropa halten sollte.³⁶⁰

The fact that the VS had sought to engage not only with the questions of war and peace, but specifically with the issue of conflict between the Eastern and Western blocs since the mid-1970s demonstrates that the crisis of the 1980s was defined and fuelled by long-standing questions concerning the roles and public positions of the organisation in relation to larger political

³⁵⁸ Bleicher-Nagelsmann, p. 18.

³⁵⁹ Schock, Behringer and Schmidt-Fehringer, p. 319.

³⁶⁰ Schock, Behringer and Schmidt-Fehringer, p. 319.

issues, and was by no means something entirely unexpected or arising overnight. Additionally, the involvement of these political issues, particularly in the GDR, coupled with the representation of the VS of its members originating from both German states and holding a wide range of attitudes and positions in relation to the issues at hand – particularly following an influx of writers from the GDR following the Biermann affair in 1976 – show the complexity of the crisis for the organisation. Far from being a simple dispute between colleagues, the debates surrounding the questions of engagement, obligation, and the representative capacity of the VS were therefore of fundamental importance to the structure and function of the organisation as a whole, and encompassed a variety of issues, many of which were well beyond the control of the individuals involved.

Following on from this, the first main phase of the crisis concerned questions of the contribution of the VS to relations between the two German states, particularly the involvement of the organisation with the East German government. As the previous analysis from Schock et al. shows, this engagement was closely linked to the ‘friedenspolitischen Bemühungen’ of the VS under the direction of Bernt Engelmann, in the sense of aiming to use the political and cultural influence of its members to contribute to a lessening of tensions by interacting with their counterparts in the GDR. However, this fulfilment of positional obligations to contribute positively to political discourse was rendered problematic by the status of the West German Verband deutscher Schriftsteller and Schriftstellerverband der DDR in relation to their respective governments. While the VS was founded as an effectively independent, private organisation representing its members’ interests, and later

a subsidiary organisation within the print and paper trade union, its ostensive counterpart across the German-German border was – in accordance with the socialist system – much more closely tied to the East German state, both in organisational structure and policy.

Following the general complexity of the status and engagement of the VS, the status of exiled authors from the GDR was a particularly thorny issue for the organisation in this endeavour. This included opposition in general terms to cooperating and effectively endorsing the policies of the East German state shared by exiled writers and numerous West German members of the VS, but also more specific objections to working with the Schriftstellerverband der DDR and its president Hermann Kant following his active support for the Politbüro's policies and decisions such as the expulsion of Wolf Biermann, along with hostile attitudes towards exiled writers and remarks that their 'inferior works' had been accepted in the West on their political rather than artistic merit.³⁶¹ This naturally served as an obstacle to convivial dialogue and cooperation. In addition, the VS was presented with two sets of conflicting obligations as a result of these issues, with the positional obligation of engaged writers to exert influence and provide critique in political discourses supporting engagement and collaborative action on the one hand, and equally pressing positional obligations for the organisation to adequately represent its members' interests, along with deeper political obligations for the organisation's leadership to respect the democratic mandate provided by its members on the other.

³⁶¹ K. Stuart Parkes, *Writers and Politics in Germany, 1945-2008* (Rochester, NY: Camden House, 2009), p. 151.

As was seen in the debates surrounding writers' engagement and East-West relations in the previous chapter, this issue and its underlying obligations became particularly apparent in relation to the series of conferences attended by prominent figures from both blocs which occurred between 1981 and 1983. Although, as the previous analysis of these summits showed, the disputes between contributors became more apparent as the series went on, instances of these arguments were also to be found from the beginning of this endeavour.

The first controversial issue surrounding the organisation of the first Berliner Begegnung and the involvement of the VS and Bernt Engelmann in particular centred on the close cooperation with the event's main organiser in the GDR, Stephan Hermlin, along with the East German state in general. Despite the positive connotations of cooperative efforts between individuals, concerns were also expressed that the event could be manipulated by the East German regime to reinforce its own legitimacy and the legitimacy of policies regarding dissident writers under socialism, described in the analysis of the East German Akademie der Künste as an attempt, 'diese Begegnung als "kommunistisch orientiert," von der Sowjetunion und der Führung der SED gesteuerte Aktivität abzustempeln'.³⁶²

Although the summit itself proved to be a mostly productive event with little in the way of disputes over conditions in East and West – aside from a few incidents such as a frank exchange of opinions regarding the declaration of martial law in Poland between Günter Grass and Alexander Abusch³⁶³ – or the

³⁶² 'Bericht über die "Berliner Begegnung zur Fragen der Friedensförderung" am 13. und 14.12.1981' (Akademie der Künste, 1982).

³⁶³ *Berliner Begegnung zur Friedensförderung: Protokolle des Schriftstellertreffens am 13./14. Dezember 1981*, pp. 133–35.

feared appropriation of these figures' status to endorse the East German system, the issue of collaboration between writers in East and West remained somewhat problematic, as can be seen in a comment made by Hermlin shortly following the discussion in East Berlin:

Ich habe immer den Standpunkt vertreten: Wer den Frieden will, ist dazu verdammt, mit der anderen Seite zu verhandeln, zu reden usw. Es ist völlig uninteressant, mit sich selber Frieden zu machen, das heißt, mit den Leuten Frieden zu machen, die sowieso so denken, wie man selber denkt. Das ist das Einfachste von der Welt.³⁶⁴

This perspective on the contributions of exiled writers presents the concept of being condemned to work with 'the other side' as an inherent factor in engagement with the peace movement. Whether in terms of opposition between the East German state and emigrated dissidents, writers and governments in general, or between individual members of an organisation in favour of and in opposition to a particular line of engagement, the engagement with 'the other side' and differing opinions is depicted as an unavoidable consequence of organisational engagement. Additionally, this sentiment highlights a more general problem, in that engagement with large social and political issues such as peace – particularly organisational engagement involving a variety of opinions and beliefs – necessarily involves taking on positions which are objectionable to at least some of the individuals involved.

This disagreement with aspects of the engagement of the VS with the peace movement through collaborative efforts continued over the course of the

³⁶⁴ Schock, Behringer and Schmidt-Fehringer, p. 320.

summit series, with the resignation of Frank-Wolf Matthies in April 1982 over the proposition of VS members participating in a 1 May demonstration,³⁶⁵ and further disputes in the aftermath of the 1982 Interlit summit, with critics such as Gerhard Zwerenz accusing the VS leadership of deliberately excluding ‘Dissidenten wie Biermann, Bahro, Bieler, Kopelew, Kunze, Kempowski, Loest, Seyppel’ in order to appease the representatives of the GDR, and going as far as to call for the resignation of Engelmann over the issue.³⁶⁶ This debate was soon followed by the resignation of Zwerenz, citing an opposition to the ‘Wendung des VS in der Deutschland-Politik’ along with Reiner Kunze, who accused the VS in general and Engelmann in particular of ‘würdelosen Opportunismus’ in their involvement with German-German politics.³⁶⁷ These resignations and evident opposition to the direction of the VS’s policies in this period served to define a sense of crisis in the organisation, as can be seen in an appeal by the VS board of directors in September 1983 to keep disputes and notices of resignation out of public discussion, noted in the analysis of Schock et al. that ‘es sei allerdings unkollegial, die Austritte über die Presse zu erklären statt in einer innerverbandlichen Diskussion’.³⁶⁸

In spite of this intermediate stage of the developing crisis in the VS, Bernt Engelmann was re-elected as chairman of the organisation in 1983, after the main opposing candidate – Hans Christoph Buch, primarily backed by the Berliner Landesverband – withdrew at short notice.³⁶⁹ While Engelmann retained the leadership position and democratic mandate from the VS

³⁶⁵ Schock, Behringer and Schmidt-Fehringer, p. 320.

³⁶⁶ Ibid., p. 321.

³⁶⁷ Ibid.

³⁶⁸ Ibid., p. 323.

³⁶⁹ Ibid., p. 324.

membership, this position remained somewhat tenuous, with the effectively uncontested re-election being far from a sound endorsement of prevailing VS policies – a point which was immediately reinforced by the resignation of Carl Amery and Peter Chotjewitz from the VS board.³⁷⁰

This intermediate phase of the VS crisis extended into the controversies and debates surrounding the second Berliner Begegnung in April 1983, which generally continued the trend of disagreement and criticism of VS policies on an individual basis. However, in the latter half of 1983, actions by Bernt Engelmann in his representative capacity as head of the VS led to a final deepening of the crisis as it reached its final phase. Following the dissolution of the Polish writers' union on the orders of the military regime in July 1983, a telegram was written jointly by Bernt Engelmann and the General Secretary of the West German P.E.N. Club Hanns Werner Schwarze to the Polish Prime Minister General Wojciech Jaruzelski in August, expressing concern over the fate of the union, and appealing for 'die umgehende wiederzulassung eines schriftsteller-verbandes, der die interessen der autoren wahrnehmen kann'.³⁷¹

This telegram immediately ignited intense debates over the role of the VS and its leadership, with three particularly problematic issues with its content coming to the fore. Firstly, the somewhat mild tone of disapproval and subsequent openness to working to improve the situation for writers in Poland led to accusations of legitimising or even endorsing the actions of the military regime. Secondly, the fact that the telegram had been signed by Engelmann as the representative of the VS without consulting members of the organisation or

³⁷⁰ Schock, Behringer and Schmidt-Fehringer, p. 325.

³⁷¹ Hanns Werner Schwarze and Bernt Engelmann, 'Gemeinsames Telex des VS und des P.E.N. an den Vorsitzenden des Ministerrates der Volksrepublik Polen', 1983.

necessarily aiming to represent their views and interests caused further questions over the democratic and representative nature of the organisation in its forays into political engagement. Finally, the necessity of ‘a’ writers’ union in Poland proved to be a particularly incendiary suggestion. As Schock wryly notes, the use of this indefinite article proved hugely controversial – perhaps fittingly for a dispute between writers.³⁷² The reason for this controversy was the failure of this suggestion to draw a distinction between the re-establishment of the banned Polish writers’ union, and the establishment of a new organisation much more tightly controlled by the military regime.

This sentiment was expressed in more inflammatory terms in a public appeal signed by 25 members of the VS including Günter Grass, Hans Christoph Buch and Heinrich Böll, entitled ‘Zur Polen-Erklärung des VS Bundesvorstandes’:

Gerade in der gegenwärtigen Situation sind unsere Schriftstellerkollegen in Polen, deren Verband durch Diktat zerstört wurde, auf unsere Hilfe angewiesen. Die Erklärung des VS-Vorstandes jedoch ermutigt die Militärregierung der Volksrepublik Polen, einen Quisling-Verband aufzubauen.³⁷³

Aside from expressing the fundamental objection of the signatories to the Jaruzelski telegram, the declaration goes on to criticise the action of the VS in relation to the legitimacy and positional obligations of writers in general:

Nicht hinzunehmen ist die unzulängliche und feige Haltung des Vorstands unseres Verbandes. Auf diese Weise lassen wir unsere

³⁷² Schock, Behringer and Schmidt-Fehringer, p. 1.

³⁷³ Ibid., p. 357.

Kollegen in Polen im Stich und ruinieren gleichzeitig den eigenen Verband. In einer Zeit der geistigen Wende nach rechts müssen besonders wir Schriftsteller glaubwürdig bleiben. Sie verspielen diese Glaubwürdigkeit, wenn Sie hinnehmen, daß den polnischen Autoren das Recht auf Selbstorganisation und die Möglichkeit der Publikation genommen werden, die sie hier jederzeit verteidigen.³⁷⁴

As such, this appeal presents the telegram not simply as a diplomatic faux pas, but as an abject failure on behalf of the VS leadership to represent the other members' interests, along with a failure to uphold the positional obligations inherent in their positions as engaged writers and public figures. As the signatories argue, the failure of the VS leadership in this instance to criticise a misuse of power leading to the repression of fellow writers in Poland allowed these colleagues to continue being barred from engaging in public discourse in their own right, as well as detracting from the societal position of engaged writers – and thereby further impeding the ability of these figures to contribute meaningfully to other discourses – by undermining the expertise and trustworthiness on which this privileged position is based.

Despite the severity of the allegations raised against Bernt Engelmann, the 'Erklärung der 25' did not go as far as to call for the resignation of the VS leadership, or to offer the resignation of the members involved, instead appealing for a withdrawal of the statements made in the offending telegram, along with the publishing of the protest statement in the VS publication *die feder* in order to foster further discussion. However, this situation quickly deteriorated further, partly due to a (from the perspective of the signatories)

³⁷⁴ Schock, Behringer and Schmidt-Fehringer, p. 357.

unsatisfactory response on behalf of Engelmann in the face of the expressed criticisms, and shortly thereafter, with a further instance of unexpected public engagement by the VS chairman, who criticised the Peace Prize of the German Book Trade laureate Manès Sperber's aversion to the general principle of pacifism,³⁷⁵ arguing that this attitude rejected the possibility of peaceful coexistence, and thereby encouraged nuclear armament and escalation.³⁷⁶

As with the Jaruzelski telegram, this instance of public engagement on the part of Engelmann sparked criticisms of a lack of consideration for his representative capacity as head of the VS set against personal engagement, including individual calls for his resignation from Jürgen Fuchs, Kay Hoff, and Günter Grass in October 1983.³⁷⁷ Again, these criticisms were not given substantial responses from the VS board, until a second appeal signed by a total of 50 prominent VS members was published the following month, putting the dissatisfaction with the organisation's chairman in much blunter terms.

Building on the problematic nature of the VS leadership's engagement with the situation in Poland, its treatment of members who had emigrated from the GDR, and the criticisms of Sperber, the 'Erklärung der 50' not only called for the resignation of Bernt Engelmann, but also expanded on the issues within the organisation which had led to their protest statement:

Wir erklären, daß wir uns durch Bernt Engelmann nicht mehr vertreten fühlen und fordern ihn zum Rücktritt auf. Seit Bernt Engelmann dem Verband vorsteht, hat er die Interessen der Schriftsteller ständig einer

³⁷⁵ Neander, p. 1.

³⁷⁶ Schock, Behringer and Schmidt-Fehringer, p. 328.

³⁷⁷ Ibid., p. 329.

falsch verstandenen Diplomatie untergeordnet. [...] Bernt Engelmann hat von uns kein Mandat, als Vorsitzender des VS Kollegen Zensuren zu erteilen und Denkverbote auszusprechen.³⁷⁸

With this, the appeal draws on both Engelmann's positional obligations to represent the principles of free expression and writers' contributions to public discourse, along with the specific political obligation based on the democratic structure of the VS to adequately represent the views and interests of its members, and argues that the instances of engagement undertaken by the VS chairman had failed to uphold these on all counts. Leading on from the political obligations inherent in the structure of the VS, a comment is also passed regarding the nature of the organisation itself, stating that: 'Der VS ist keine Gesinnungsgemeinschaft, sondern eine gewerkschaftliche Interessenvertretung'.³⁷⁹ Therefore, while taking specific issue with the problematic instances of engagement undertaken by Engelmann, this second appeal by prominent VS members also serves to distance the VS – in their conception of the organisation – from more active models of public engagement, returning to an emphasis on the main priority for the organisation on the pragmatically defined issue of representing its members' interests within a trade union framework, and argues that Engelmann had overstepped his bounds as chairman of the VS by undertaking forms of public, political engagement for which he had no mandate from the organisation's members. Therefore, the directly personal dimension of this disagreement with Engelmann's engagement showed that the appeal not only represented a difference of opinion over the public actions of the organisation, but also

³⁷⁸ Schock, Behringer and Schmidt-Fehringer, p. 360.

³⁷⁹ Ibid.

showed a loss of faith in the representative authority of the VS chairman, and a challenge to his interpretations of obligation and necessary engagement.

Finally, these accusations of overzealous engagement return to the crucial question of detachment in relation to the social and political roles of engaged writers, with the final criticism of the VS leadership's actions not being that they failed to uphold expectations to perform moral, representative, or irritant functions, but that they failed to retain the general critical distance necessary for undertaking any of these specific roles.

From this final stage of the crisis in the early 1980s, the resignation of Bernt Engelmann along with the rest of the VS board of directors two weeks after the publication of the *Erklärung der 50* appeared an almost foregone conclusion, and was followed by a period of slow and decidedly less controversial reconstruction starting with the election of Hans-Peter Bleuel as the new chair of the organisation at the 1984 Saarbrücken conference.

In the aftermath of the crisis, four elements relating to engagement and obligation became apparent. Firstly, as can be seen in the various disputes and developments in this section, the factor of internal conflicts obstructed and at times completely overrode possibilities for organisational engagement with wider social and political issues. Secondly, and leading on from this issue, the instances of organisational engagement which did occur occasionally contributed to further conflicts within the organisation itself, such as the debates surrounding the *Berliner Begegnungen* and Bernt Engelmann's engagement with the status of the Polish writers' union. Thirdly, while organisational engagement was at times problematic, it is evident that this did

not necessarily preclude engagement on an individual basis. The fact that the VS crisis occurred more or less concurrently with the highpoint of peace movement protest activity in the early 1980s, including the numerous instances of writers' engagement analysed in the other chapters of my thesis attests to this state of affairs. As can be seen in the Engelmann examples however, the main issue with organisational and individual forms of engagement occurred when conflicts arose between individually held positions and the representative obligations of organisational membership. This therefore leads into the final issue relating to the VS crisis, namely the fact that the positional and political obligations along with the personal interpretations of their application and their (non-) fulfilment remained important both in relation to the VS crisis and other aspects of the organisation's functionality, as the following section will analyse in greater detail.

7.2.2. Conflicting obligations and public appeals

Following the varied obligations examined in the previous section, a final instance of conflicting obligations can be found in a selection of appeals published either by the VS itself or as part of programmes led by the organisation. For the purposes of this analysis, the 1981 Appell der Schriftsteller Europas,³⁸⁰ 1982 Kölner Manifest,³⁸¹ and 1983 Erklärung der 50 at the end of the previously examined crisis³⁸² provide not only a further insight into the development of attitudes towards organisational engagement within the VS in the period in question, but also a range of interpretations of the

³⁸⁰ Bernt Engelmann, Hermann Kant and others., 'Appell der Schriftsteller Europas', in *Mut zur Angst : Schriftsteller für den Frieden* (Darmstadt: Luchterhand, 1982), p. 20.

³⁸¹ Engelmann, Hoffmann, and others, *Es geht, es geht--*, pp. 405–06.

³⁸² Schock, Behringer and Schmidt-Fehringer, p. 360.

positional, political and moral obligations put forward by its members. Although the three documents differ significantly in their content and intentions, with the first being an appeal from writers across Europe directly relating to nuclear escalation, while the second was a resolution agreed on at the conclusion of the 1982 Interlit conference representing engaged writers from across the world, and the third referred exclusively to internal VS issues, the insight into underlying obligations and perspectives on organisational engagement represented across these appeals is nonetheless important. This is particularly relevant as all three documents were made as explicit public appeals, meaning that the expressed roles and obligations are not only indicative of engaged writers' attitudes towards the issues at hand, but also show their self-definition and presentation to a wider audience, along with clearer statements of protest and intent in comparison to the discussions between VS members.

The driving reason for each of the three appeals to be made can be seen as a combination of a generalised moral obligation to act in the face of a rising threat, coupled with a positional obligation on the part of writers in a position to use their prominent status and critical role in relation to social and political developments in order to contribute to the public appeal. This is evident in the *Appell der Schriftsteller Europas*, with the observation that 'mit Atomwaffen ist kein begrenzter Krieg führbar; er würde die ganze Welt vernichten',³⁸³ showing the threat of nuclear war as a question of pressing global importance, with the subsequent emphasis on the overriding importance of working together reinforcing the role of writers alongside others in efforts to combat

³⁸³ Engelmann, Kant and others, p. 20.

this potentially world-ending threat. Despite this emphasis on cooperative efforts, a particular positional obligation is put forward for writers based on their ability to have their voices heard on a wider scale than other citizens, and therefore the representative capacity that accompanies this role.

A similar rhetorical technique can be found in the Kölner Manifest, albeit with the focus of both the threat and reactions to it broadened somewhat. While the Appell der Schriftsteller Europas focusses on a single continent and Germany in particular as the centre of the threat of war, the Kölner Manifest draws on threats of both nuclear and conventional war, alongside other instances of violence and oppression across the world, and calls for equally international support and engagement to work against these issues. Nonetheless, the moral obligation to act immediately to counteract the threats presented, along with the particular obligations of engaged writers to use their influence and representative capacity in this manner are very much present in each.

Compared to the other two appeals, the threats and obligations put forward in the Erklärung der 50 may at first appear entirely different. While the previous two appeals concern issues of war and peace on a grand scale, the declaration of concerned VS members focusses almost exclusively on internal organisational issues. However, in terms of rhetoric and obligations laid out, similar patterns can be found. Instead of addressing threats to the continued existence of the world, the Erklärung der 50 draws attention to what its signatories understood to be a clear threat to the existence of their organisation, namely the leadership of Bernt Engelmann and the direction in which his policies and engagement were leading the VS:

Es verstößt gegen die elementaren Interessen der Schriftsteller, wenn unabdingbare Voraussetzungen ihrer Arbeit wie das Recht auf freie Meinungsäußerung, unzensurierte Publikation und Selbstorganisation einer dubiosen Realpolitik geopfert werden.³⁸⁴

Despite the difference in scale of threats between appeals, a similar moral obligation is proposed in relation to the affected individuals – to act immediately and in a unified manner in order to draw attention to and prevent the further development of this threat. Furthermore, the positional obligations put forward in this appeal are even more focussed than in the previous two. While the Appell der Schriftsteller Europas and Kölner Manifest draw on the public roles of writers and urge them to exert a positive influence on public and political discourse, the positional obligations put forward in the Erklärung der 50 exclusively concern members of the VS and focus on bearing witness to problematic developments within the organisation, leading to a withdrawal of the democratic mandate of the organisation's elected leader. As such, both the threat and the proposed actions against it are presented as purely internal issues in the VS, but are nonetheless vital for its continued operation and the interests of its members.

Additionally, the problems associated with the VS's 'dubiosen Realpolitik' show issues relating to pragmatism in terms of the roles and obligations of engaged writers. Just as the Appell der Schriftsteller Europas and Kölner Manifest call on writers to face an overriding moral obligation to achieve the ideal of peace, a similar moral obligation is put forward in the Erklärung der 50 to uphold the ideals on which the VS was founded, along

³⁸⁴ Schock, Behringer and Schmidt-Fehringer, p. 360.

with the more general roles to which engaged writers should aspire, with the accusation that these ideals had been compromised or abandoned altogether by the organisation's attempts to exercise political influence. Moreover, the criticism of 'dubiosen Realpolitik' implies that this course of action had not only abandoned idealistic engagement, but had also failed to undertake a genuinely pragmatic approach, with the concept of Realpolitik being used simply as an attempt to justify a controversial act of engagement.

Leading on from these common elements of obligation across the three appeals, a second shared theme can be found in the representative roles put forward. In addition to the positional obligation for writers to bear witness to threatening developments, further positional obligations are put forward relating to the representative capacity of the figures involved. With the *Appell der Schriftsteller Europas*, this representation focusses on engaged writers' role in speaking on behalf of the concerned population of Europe. With the prospect of nuclear war presented as threatening to turn Europe into an 'atomaren Schlachtfeld',³⁸⁵ an emphasis is therefore placed on the responsibility of its population to seek to avert this occurrence, and consequently an obligation on the part of engaged writers to represent these concerns, both as members of this population, and as prominent figures with an enhanced ability to have their voices heard in public discourse.

Similarly, the representative capacity of engaged writers is shown in the *Kölner Manifest* as having positional obligations to represent communities across the world both as citizens and as public figures in the face of threats, with an expanded representative role for writers in the developing world in

³⁸⁵ Engelmann, Kant and others, p. 20.

particular to draw attention to violence and oppression in these communities on a global scale.

Finally, as with the previous instance of moral and positional obligations, the representative capacity of the involved writers put forward in the *Erklärung der 50* differs somewhat from the previous two appeals, but nonetheless shares key features. Instead of representing general populations, the representative role put forward in this appeal centres on engaged writers in the VS as members of a democratic organisation and as writers in a more general sense, with both of these statuses being threatened in a manner which required corrective action. Similarly, the positional obligation to draw wider attention to a threatening situation is also in evidence. While on a much smaller scale than the acts of violence and threatened existence addressed in the *Kölner Manifest*, the obligation to draw attention to the (from the signatories' perspective) VS leadership's failure to uphold its representative obligations uses a similar framework, and is oriented towards similar objectives, namely using the increased awareness of the situation to effect change, or at least to help stabilise a deteriorating situation.

Despite these similarities, a number of key differences are also apparent in the ways in which the three appeals approach their topics, their general purpose, and the (at times conflicting) obligations involved. The first of these concerns the importance of engagement with the peace movement. While each of the three appeals addresses issues of peace and engagement aimed at fostering it, the ways in which these are approached differ greatly. For the *Appell der Schriftsteller Europas*, this is very clearly stated in the closing line:

‘Nichts ist so wichtig wie die Erhaltung des Friedens!’³⁸⁶ This overriding importance of the issues of war and peace lead directly from the scale of the threat examined above. With the prospect of nuclear war threatening to destroy the entire world, this appeal sets out the preservation of peace – defined as an absence of all-out nuclear war – as the single most important objective for all involved, necessitating any and all possible forms of engagement in order to achieve it. This is reinforced by the provenance of the appeal itself, which was organised not only by members of the VS, but as a collaborative project aided by engaged writers across Europe, including support from the East German Schriftstellerverband under the direction of its president Hermann Kant, along with other individuals and groups across the Eastern bloc.

This spirit of inclusivity based on the overriding importance of peace was also evident in the Kölner Manifest. However, the definition of peace is greatly affected by the shift in perspective from a European context focussing on a prospective nuclear war to a global context, meaning that the 1982 appeal was influenced by:

Dem Bewußtsein, daß Hunger und Elend in der Dritten Welt keine geringere Bedrohung für die gesamte Menschheit sind als das anhaltende Wettrüsten.³⁸⁷

Because of this, the all-encompassing importance of maintaining peace put forward in the Appell der Schriftsteller Europas was tempered somewhat by simultaneous necessities to address issues of violence and oppression in the developing world, thereby broadening the scope of the appeal and its

³⁸⁶ Engelmann, Kant and others, p. 20.

³⁸⁷ Engelmann, Hoffmann, and others, *Es geht, es geht--*, p. 405.

associated positional obligations for engaged writers to not only seek to prevent further nuclear escalation and the outbreak of nuclear war, but also to engage with, call attention to, and work towards overcoming lower-scale instances of violence. Moreover, this call to bear witness to the problems in the developing world and speak on behalf of those who are unable to have their voices heard in a wider public context draw on two of the central roles of writers put forward in Chapter 4, and use the positional and moral obligations associated with these roles as justifications for engagement with social and political issues in a global context.

In contrast with the global character of the Kölner Manifest, the *Erklärung der 50* returns to the European context and addresses problems related to political engagement and its consequences for both the VS and writers in general. Citing the telegram sent to the Polish military regime and Bernt Engelmann's public criticism of Manès Sperber, the appeal highlights the problematic consequences of these instances of public engagement, arguing that the former instance effectively endorsed the actions of the Jaruzelski government in dissolving and replacing the Polish writers' union, and that both instances had reflected poorly on the public image and trust in writers associated with these actions, therefore hindering their ability to contribute meaningfully to further public discussions, or even to fulfil the basic requirements of their roles as writers. With this, the appeal not only disputes the overriding necessity of maintaining peace above all else, along with its associated moral obligation for engagement towards this goal by any means possible, but argues that some instances of public engagement were detrimental to the wider issue of writers' own positions. As such, the

contribution of writers to the preservation of peace in this case is presented as a secondary concern, behind the continued ability of writers to meaningfully contribute to public discussions. Moreover, the intended audience of the Erklärung der 50 also differs somewhat from the previous two appeals. While the first two appeals include a general audience in their efforts to speak on others' behalf and calls for engagement with the peace movement, the VS appeal limits its claim to representative authority to engaged writers, and uses its presence in the public sphere primarily to draw the attention of other writers to the issues within the VS.

The second way in which the three appeals differ significantly lies in the interaction between the different forms of obligation supporting them. For the Appell der Schriftsteller Europas and Kölner Manifest, this issue is quite simply laid out, with the moral obligation to act against a pressing threat complementing the positional obligations on the part of engaged writers to contribute to achieving the goals laid out using their own positions and expertise. The only potential conflict put forward in either of these appeals lies in the parallel lines of engagement in the Kölner Manifest regarding the global threat of nuclear war and more localised issues of violence and oppression, and even in this case, neither the engagement with these issues nor the obligations underpinning them are presented as mutually exclusive. In fact, a driving principle in the Kölner Manifest is that these two issues could be addressed either simultaneously or separately, with the assertion that: 'wir begrüßen jede Vorleistung, die zur Verminderung der Bedrohung erbracht wird'.³⁸⁸ Therefore, regardless of the potential for conflicts between addressing global and local

³⁸⁸ Engelmann, Hoffmann, and others, *Es geht, es geht--*, p. 406.

issues, the appeal emphasises the necessity for engagement and cooperation supported by complementing moral and positional obligations, with any contribution to this viewed positively.

However, as with the previously examined perspectives on engagement and threat, the status of different lines of obligation was problematic in relation to the Erklärung der 50. In identifying problems with the forms of engagement put forward by the VS leadership, the appeal presents a conflict between the moral and positional obligations of writers to engage in public discussion and to speak out on important issues set against the political obligations attached to leading the organisation and representing its members and their interests. Furthermore, by showing the disagreement of the organisation's members with the decisions made and calling for Engelmann's resignation, the appeal argues that the wrong course of action was taken by the VS leadership, with the personal moral obligations of the VS chairman being favoured over his representative political and positional obligations, to the detriment of the organisation. Moreover, the objection to dubious Realpolitik further draws into question the moral justification for Engelmann's actions, and strengthens the protest message by not only highlighting a conflict between the obligations of the VS leadership and the organisation as a whole, but also arguing that the two sets of obligations were not equally justified, with the VS chairman's moral justification being compromised by his approach to engagement.

The difficulties of conflicting obligations were not solely felt by the VS leadership. In addition to the problems faced by Engelmann, a second set of conflicting obligations is outlined in the appeal, focussing on the concerned VS members who had written and signed it. While sharing the moral obligation to

contribute to the peace movement along with the positional obligations as engaged writers to do so which formed the basis of the previous two appeals, an additional positional obligation as members of the writers' organisation complicates this, with the representative organisational engagement serving to undermine the ability of individual members to contribute to the relevant discussions on their own terms. Therefore, both the demand for Bernt Engelmann's resignation at the centre of this appeal and the individual resignations and disputes which led to the crisis within the VS can be seen as attempts to solve this problem of conflicting obligations. In the case of positional obligations to support and be represented by the organisation being at odds with the moral and positional obligations underpinning other instances of engagement, the proposed overhaul of the VS leadership and personal withdrawals from the organisation both serve to dismantle the positional obligations concerning organisational engagement in order to focus on the opposing set of obligations.

7.3. Summary

Following this examination of the development of the VS, what conclusions can be drawn regarding organisational engagement, the principle of 'Einigkeit der Einzelgänger' and the obligations involved in it?

The first important aspect of the involvement of the VS with the peace movement is that although the organisation played a leading role in a number of key instances of writers' engagement including public appeals, summits, and collaborative projects with other individuals and organisations beyond the Federal Republic, collective organisational engagement under the aegis of the VS was not the primary form of public engagement for West German writers

in the period in question. While the involvement of the organisation at times provided a useful platform for discussion and contribution to wider public discourses, instances such as the Appell der Schriftsteller Europas in which the VS put itself forward as the direct representative of its participating members were considerably rarer than the more independently-minded engagement by its members, which encompassed a range of roles and obligations not necessarily in line with the wider positions of the VS. As the previous chapters have shown in particular detail, these individual roles and forms of engagement were evident in the contributions of engaged writers to peace movement activities which did not involve the VS such as the action phase demonstrations analysed in Chapter 5. Additionally, even in events such as the conferences examined in Chapter 6 which involved the VS at an organisational level, the obligations and roles taken on by participating writers were defined more by individual perspectives than organisational guidelines. In short, the meaningful contributions to the peace movement on the part of engaged writers were often made despite the representative concerns and disputes within the VS, rather than being facilitated by the organisational framework.

This independence in taking on positions grew increasingly important through the development of the crisis within the VS during the early 1980s, to the point where organisational engagement came to be seen as problematic in and of itself, leading to increased calls for the organisation to revert to its basic goal of pragmatic representation of its members' professional interests. By the final stages of the crisis, it is apparent that the leading principle of 'Einigkeit der Einzelgänger' waned in relevance in relation to the engagement of the VS in this period. Although the organisation and its members had never

established anything so formal as an official unified policy towards the peace movement or engagement with other individuals and organisations, this period saw a distinct retreat from 'Einigkeit' and an increased push towards independent engagement of the 'Einzelgänger', even if this push for individual independence was ironically undertaken in a collective appeal by those concerned members of the organisation. This shift was catalysed by additional factors, including disputes over the VS leadership's claims to representative authority for the organisation in acts of public engagement such as the Jaruzelski telegram, as well as more directly personal factors in members' objections to the policies and general leadership of the organisation.

Leading on from these problems of representation and organisational engagement, the final aspect of the engagement of the VS and its members concerns the sets of conflicting obligations held by each. As has been shown in the analysis of the crisis and public appeals made during this period, public engagement on the part of both individual members of the VS and representative actions on behalf of the organisation were both influenced by sets of moral, positional, and political obligations within both personal and organisational frameworks. When these sets of obligations aligned, this led to reinforced support for engagement with the peace movement and its themes, even in the case of the engagement itself being defined in primarily individual terms. However, conflicts arising between these sets of obligations were often problematic, to the point where personal and organisational grievances and other internal issues relating to the VS appeared to eclipse the concerns of external public engagement. Far from being a unifying element supporting the endeavours of independent engaged writers in relation to the peace movement

in this period, the factor of organisational engagement under the banner of the VS often caused as many issues as it addressed, with questions of representation and obligation, along with personal interpretations of these issues, contributing significantly to both its unifying and divisive aspects.

8. Friedensgedichte

The final area of writers' involvement with the peace movement to be examined lies in their political engagement through literary works, specifically poems. With the rising tensions of the Second Cold War along with the increasing visibility of military and political debates examined in previous chapters, it is no wonder that the topics of war and peace weighed just as heavily on the minds of poets as those of protesters and politicians in this period. Hage and Fink's overview of the state of German literature in the early 1980s identifies a general trend towards 'Eiszeit- und Endzeitliteratur'³⁸⁹ – an analysis which is supported in Ralf Schnell's *Die Literatur der Bundesrepublik*, which notes the widespread use of metaphors of icebergs, ice age and glaciation throughout the period,³⁹⁰ along with the pervasive presence of fear and the threat of destruction:

Angst, die jedoch nicht nur dem kalkulierten Wahn des Rüstungswettlaufs geschuldet war, sondern Angst auch als Ausdruck eines *Krisenbewußtseins*, als Furcht vor gegenwärtigen und künftig drohenden ökologischen, atomaren und sozialen Katastrophen globalen Ausmaßes.³⁹¹

These analyses of the West German literary field include many more forms of literary and artistic engagement than political poetry alone, with prose literature and theatre also contributing significantly to this sense of crisis. Likewise, the field of political poetry was not limited to engagement with the

³⁸⁹ Volker Hage and Adolf Fink, *Deutsche literatur: Ein Jahresüberblick. 1982, 1982* (Stuttgart: P. Reclam, 1983), p. 42.

³⁹⁰ Ralf Schnell, *Die Literatur der Bundesrepublik*, p. 318.

³⁹¹ *Ibid.*, p. 305.

peace movement and the concept of obligation, and encompassed a range of themes, causes, and perspectives on politics and society in this period. This chapter does not aim to comprehensively cover all aspects of political engagement in the West German literary field, or to examine all areas of engagement undertaken in political poetry in this period. This analysis focusses on engaged poetry partly due to the ability of these works to comment on current events due to their shorter writing time than for instance novels, and partly for the contrasts between poetic form and discursive statements in conveying protest messages. Additionally, while the theme of obligation was far from the only factor affecting engagement with socio-political issues, it played a central role in defining a range of attitudes towards literary engagement and the roles of engaged poets. This chapter therefore follows the previous case studies in addressing the issues of obligation in engaged poetry as one part of a larger whole, analysing the obligations and contributions of engaged poets in relation to the wider peace movement.

To this end, this chapter focusses its analysis on two anthologies: *Acht Minuten noch zu Leben?*,³⁹² a collection of West German poems published in 1987 in East Germany, and *Was sind das für Zeiten*,³⁹³ a broader overview of ‘Deutschsprachige Gedichte der achtziger Jahre’ edited by Hans Bender and published in 1988 in the Federal Republic.

Both the van Ooyen and Bender collections were laid out and published with particular goals in mind. This is most evident in the case of *Acht Minuten*,

³⁹² *Acht Minuten noch zu leben?: Neue Friedensgedichte aus der BRD*, ed. by Hans van Ooyen (Berlin: Neues Leben, 1987).

³⁹³ *Was sind das für Zeiten: Deutschsprachige Gedichte der achtziger Jahre*, ed. by Hans Bender (Munich: C. Hanser, 1988).

which explicitly aims to present a particular view of West German poetry, society and its peace movement to an East German readership, but also applies to *Was sind das für Zeiten*, which aimed to provide a comprehensive overview of poetry from across the two German states as well as Austria and Switzerland, while at the same time retaining ‘sowohl den Bestand als auch die Autonomie des einzelnen Gedichts oder Autors’, as the editor’s afterword notes.³⁹⁴ In order to achieve this, the poems in Bender’s collection are divided into a number of categories dealing with general themes, which are nonetheless left broad enough for the individual poems to be judged individually. One of these categories contains a number of poems relating to the issues of war and peace, under the title ‘Ich traue dem Frieden nicht’.³⁹⁵ This title, taken from Ilse Aichinger’s *Ortsanfang*,³⁹⁶ conveys a sense of unease in relation to the apparent state of peace in the period, and contains a variety of relevant poems examining themes of war, peace, and the roles and obligations of poets in relation to these issues. However, the poems in this section do not all exclusively deal with these issues, with some dealing with themes tangentially related to the questions of war and peace, and others representing very different perspectives to those forming the core of my analysis. Therefore, while Bender’s anthology aims to give a comprehensive perspective on German language poetry in the 1980s, my analysis focusses on a smaller subset based on the themes, roles, and obligations expressed in relation to the questions of nuclear war and the West German peace movement.

³⁹⁴ Bender, p. 243.

³⁹⁵ Ibid., p. 31.

³⁹⁶ Ilse Aichinger, ‘Ortsanfang’, in *Was sind das für Zeiten* ed. by Hans Bender, p. 41.

This analysis encompasses a range of literary themes along with the political agendas involved in both the poems themselves and the editorial choices in the collected publications, with a particular focus on the expression of obligation, both implicit and explicit, and the shared themes across literary and public engagement within the peace movement. In order to examine these factors, this chapter will be divided into two main sections. Firstly, two major themes in this selection of poems will be examined, both in the sense of their function within the works themselves and as a reflection of broader issues within the peace movement as well as in West German politics and society. Secondly, the debates surrounding these instances of engaged writing will also be examined, including questions of the roles and obligations of poets, legitimacy, and aesthetics. Although the literary aspects of the poems in question will be analysed to some extent, the focus of this analysis remains primarily on their social and political engagement, and the debates surrounding their aesthetic purpose and underlying obligations.

8.1. Themes

The first factor to be analysed lies in the content of the poems in question, specifically their major themes and the relation of these to the wider peace movement and contemporary events. This analysis focusses on two main themes within these selected works, namely fear in relation to the threat of nuclear war, and the relation of the issues of war and peace to everyday life. The first of these themes is prevalent throughout the argumentation of the peace movement, as has been seen across each of the three previous case studies, and not only contributed to the mass mobilisations of the movement's action phase, but also played a key role in the arguments, discussions, and

appeals of the preceding phases in its development. Leading on from this, the second theme to be analysed in this chapter combines the issues of fear and threats of the Cold War with more mundane experiences of the peace movement's supporters, with the intrusion of questions of war, peace, and militarisation into the everyday lives of West German citizens. In addition to being a general trend in the context of the Cold War, engagement with this theme was central to protest efforts across all spectra of the peace movement in this period, in a process identified by Susanne Schregel as a 'Wendung in den Nahraum', which focussed on bringing the issues of the peace movement into familiar, relatable terms, often highlighting the intrusion of threatening military structures and strategies into civilian existence.³⁹⁷

Although frequently approaching these themes in different ways to the mass protests, appeals, and other contributions to the peace movement, these ideas remain central to literary engagement in this period, and are represented in a wide range of poems across the two anthologies, as the following chart shows:

	Total poems	Fear of nuclear war	The everyday
Acht Minuten noch zu leben?	115	84	20
Was sind das für Zeiten	300	37	21

Fig.2

³⁹⁷ Schregel, 'Der Atomkrieg vor der Wohnungstür', p. 11.

From this composition, a number of observations can be made on the importance of these themes and their place within the collections. Firstly, it is evident that both themes are represented to a certain degree, this is not evenly distributed, with considerably more poems dealing directly with the theme of fear in the face of possible destruction than the everyday in both anthologies. Secondly, the theme of fear features more prominently in van Ooyen's collection than in Bender's, reflecting the more direct focus on the themes of war and peace in the former, compared to the latter's more general tone of life and poetry in the 1980s. Finally, while the 115 works in van Ooyen's collection are heavily outnumbered by the 300 in Bender's, they also feature a great deal more examples of engagement with the themes at the centre of this analysis, as only one of the five sections in Bender's collection containing seventy-one poems deals directly with questions of war and peace. As with the previous observation, this is primarily due to *Acht Minuten* concentrating solely on peace poetry from West Germany, with each of its four sections providing examples of works dealing with these topics, while *Was sind das* provides a much more general overview of the poetic landscape in this period.

While the themes of fear and the everyday can therefore be seen as major components of each of the two anthologies, this arrangement does not mean that these were the only important issues examined within the poems. Instead, these categories provide a useful framework with which common elements across the works in question may be identified and examined in greater detail, thus allowing for a clearer analysis of attitudes, roles, and obligations put forward.

8.1.1. Fear of nuclear war

The first and most immediately striking way in which the theme of nuclear destruction and the fears stemming from this threat come to the fore in the two anthologies featured in this analysis, even before considering the selected works within them, concerns the titles of the collections themselves. For the Bender collection, the title *Was sind das für Zeiten* refers to Brecht's *An die Nachgeborenen*, written in exile in the context of the 'finsteren Zeiten' of National Socialist dictatorship in Germany and the looming prospect of total war:

Was sind das für Zeiten, wo

Ein Gespräch über Bäume fast ein Verbrechen ist.

Weil es ein Schweigen über so viele Untaten einschließt!³⁹⁸

However, a direct parallel between circumstances in the two periods was not the stated reason behind this choice of title. Instead, the editor's afterword gives an explanation of this choice, stating:

“Was sind das für Zeiten.” Ein Fragesatz ohne Fragezeichen, an die Lyriker gerichtet: auf die Zeiten, auf ihre Taten und “Untaten” zu achten und auf sie zu reagieren.³⁹⁹

The key element borrowed from Brecht, according to the editor's notes, lies in the importance of poets' political and social engagement based on the recognition of and reaction to troubling issues. This can be interpreted not only as a commentary on the roles of engaged poets and the potential consequences

³⁹⁸ Bertolt Brecht, 'An Die Nachgeborenen' (Deutschelyrik.de)
<<http://www.deutschelyrik.de/index.php/an-die-nachgeborenen.html>>
[accessed 9 March 2014].

³⁹⁹ Bender, p. 244.

of their engagement with threatening socio-political issues, but also of a positional obligation on the part of their creators to react in this way, fulfilling the engaged writers' role of bearing witness to troubling events, and using the medium of poetry and their expertise as poets to speak out and help this message be heard.

In comparison to Bender's anthology, the second collection examined in this analysis has a title which engages more directly with the theme of fear. Van Ooyen's title *Acht Minuten noch zu leben?* makes explicit reference to the state of nuclear armament and deployment in Europe, and the threat that it posed to the European population, as explained in the editor's foreword:

Acht Minuten benötigt eine der in der BRD stationierten US-Erstschlagswaffen Typ Pershing II vom Start bis zur Detonation im Ziel. Da bleibt nicht einmal mehr Zeit, sich selbst in Sicherheit zu bringen, geschweige denn dafür, mit dem vermeintlichen Gegner über Möglichkeiten zu verhandeln, das Inferno doch noch – sozusagen in allerletzter Minute – abzuwenden.⁴⁰⁰

With this, the imminent threat of nuclear war is strongly emphasised, leading to a justified sense of fear at this prospect. Not only is the inescapable presence of the threat of nuclear war acknowledged, but the possibility of this catastrophic war being triggered with almost no warning lends it a further terrifying aspect. The particular presentation of the Pershing II as an 'Erstschlagwaffe' adds to the urgency of this theme with an additional implicit factor of aggression, hinting that not only could the war begin with insufficient

⁴⁰⁰ Ooyen, p. 5.

time for those caught in the missiles' intended target areas to reach safety, but also engaging with the possibility that the state of preparation for a possible war in the 1980s included specific plans to launch these first strikes on the part of political and military strategists. Finally, the irreversible nature of this potential conflict adds a third means by which *Acht Minuten*'s title and contextualisation emphasise the theme of fear. By showing how the limited time between launch and detonation in a war scenario would preclude diplomatic solutions or withdrawal from the brink of destruction, van Ooyen draws a contrast between the potential nuclear conflict and previous wars. A mobilised army can be withdrawn and demobilised, an ultimatum can be re-negotiated, but the eight minutes between the start of a nuclear war and the first wave of mass destruction would allow for no such action. This therefore provides a reason to react to the topic of nuclear war in the 1980s with an appropriate level of fear.

In a similar vein to the titles of the collections, the theme of fear is approached in a range of ways in the poems within them. This is particularly evident in Erich Fried's *Quia absurdum*, in which fears of the horrors of the past being repeated and apocalyptic conflict removing the prospect of a real future are not only expressed as central themes, but are also combined with a more general sense of shattered expectations and conceptions, which is established from the poem's opening lines:

Ich glaubte

Friede sei Friede

Ich glaubte Ruhe sei Ruhe

und Sicherheit Sicherheit⁴⁰¹

A sense of uncertainty and insecurity, both in terms of personal sentiments and factors such as the large-scale military strategies at the centre of these concerns is established as the main theme of the poem, and is continued through a list of similarly broken ideals, before arriving at the closing stanza:

Aber ich glaubte

die Vergangenheit sei vergangen

und die Zukunft werde die Zukunft sein⁴⁰²

Not only does Fried's poem highlight the risk of a future conflict as devastating as the atrocities of the past, but the possibility of this occurring also taints future prospects and present ways of life, undermining previous certainties, and effectively making its presence felt even without the realisation of the threat itself. This can therefore be seen as a particularly negative perspective on the pervasive influence of fear.

However, the perspectives on fear presented in the poetry of this period were not entirely dominated by the negative outlook put forward in *Quia absurdum*. A counterpoint to the dejected view, stressing both the utility and the necessity of some degree of fear and actions stemming from it can be found in numerous other works, for instance in Heinrich Böll's *Gib Alarm*, which begins by referring to unnecessary causes for alarm:

⁴⁰¹ Erich Fried, 'Quia Absurdum', in *Was sind das für Zeiten* ed. by Hans Bender, p. 46.

⁴⁰² Fried, p. 46.

Gib Alarm
 Sammle deine Freunde
 nicht
 wenn die Hyänen heulen
 nicht
 wenn der Schakal Dich umkreist
 oder
 die Haushunde kläffen⁴⁰³

This is then contrasted with a set of stranger phenomena, which are presented as reasonable grounds to feel fear, coupled with an equally pressing necessity of raising alarm and taking action:

Gib Alarm
 Sammle Deine Freunde
 wenn die Karnickel die Zähne blecken
 und ihren Blutdurst anmelden
 Wenn die Spatzen Sturzflug üben
 Und zustoßen⁴⁰⁴

While Böll emphasises the role of fear as a response to worrying signs, the poem seeks to distance itself from rampant, undirected fear regarding any and all possible concerns. The howling of hyenas and yapping of dogs in the beginning of the piece could for instance be equated with incidents such as the rhetorical sabre-rattling of the Cold War – threatening in their own right, but not necessarily a direct cause for immediate concern and action. However, the

⁴⁰³ Heinrich Böll, 'Gib Alarm', in *Acht Minuten noch zu leben?* ed. by Hans van Ooyen, p. 135.

⁴⁰⁴ Ibid.

point where fear is necessary, and where those who perceive it are presented with the obligation to take action is laid out clearly, in relation to threats which are not only immediately pressing, but unusual and beyond the normal scope of such menacing behaviour. In this case, the obligation to raise alarm is presented as immediately pressing, and is further reinforced by the fact that both the poem's title and final line take the form of the blunt imperative 'Gib Alarm'. Nonetheless, a degree of optimism is still in evidence in this conception of fear. While Fried's poem effectively treats the looming threats and associated fears as grounds to abandon hope for the future, Böll's treatment of causes for alarm implies an active utility for these fears, in the sense that their presence and the actions inspired by them could and should play a role in working against these threats. This therefore presents a particular kind of fear as a rational, meaningful response to an uncertain situation, and adds an element of urgency to the need to act not only for the sake of abstract ideals, but also with immediate fears on a more personal level.

This sense of immediacy is further emphasised in Bender's anthology with the inclusion of Walter Höllerer's *Untergrund*, which highlights the pervasive nature of the militaristic preparations, and fears resulting from this arrangement:

Es tickt und tickt im Untergrund

Es fährt dahin, daher von Ort zu Ort im Untergrund.

Statt Pilzen sprießt Rakete aus dem Wald.⁴⁰⁵

⁴⁰⁵ Walter Höllerer, 'Untergrund', in *Was Sind Das Für Zeiten*, ed. by Hans Bender, p. 50.

This perspective on the stationing of weapons such as the Pershing II gives a particularly illuminating demonstration of the theme of fear and threat in two ways. Firstly, the conception of hidden threats ticking away underground frames the missiles and other ordinance not as potential risks or provisions for future use, but rather as time bombs, counting down to an eventual detonation. This frames the destruction brought about by these munitions as an eventual inevitability rather than a potential risk, and provides a justification for fear on the part of those caught within the areas in question. Secondly, Höllerer's choice of the wood as a natural environment disturbed by the unnatural presence of missiles displays a similar sentiment to Böll's conception of worrying signs warranting alarm. While the concept of militarised spaces such as bases, depots, and bunkers may have been more generally accepted as a reality of modern military doctrine, the increasing encroachment of militarisation into landscapes, particularly with the often highly secretive stationing of strategic arms in otherwise innocuous locations is presented as problematic for two reasons. Firstly, as Schregel identifies, the engagement of the peace movement with militarised spaces became a fundamental part of the peace movement's activities in opposition to 'Kriegsvorbereitung' in this period, not only in terms of active protests, but also in a symbolic role similar to that of Höllerer's poem.⁴⁰⁶ Secondly, the intrusion of weapons of mass destruction into these natural spaces resembles Böll's bloodthirsty rabbits, in the sense of unnatural, threatening, and otherwise worrying behaviours having their presence felt in ways and spaces which would previously have been thought as natural, innocent, or uninvolved with such things. In both of these

⁴⁰⁶ Schregel, 'Der Atomkrieg vor der Wohnungstür', p. 78.

cases, the symbolic importance of this militaristic intrusion gives further justification to a sense of fear in relation to Höllerer's poem and its subject matter.

This justification for fear is given another dimension in an untitled contribution from Norbert Ney to the collection *Acht Minuten noch zu leben*. While many other contributions deal with the atrocities of the past and the necessity of working to prevent these being repeated, this poem outlines another scenario, presenting reasons to be concerned even if the potential destruction could be averted. This begins with the condition 'angenommen | die Bombe | fällt nicht' and continues with a list of potential threats before reaching its central question:

haben wir dann
genug Rezepte parat
für uns und die Kinder
und diesen Staat
genug Rezepte
fürs Leben statt
fürs Überleben?⁴⁰⁷

With this question of what to do in the event of peace prevailing, and the distinction between Leben and Überleben, Ney presents the context of the Second Cold War as a desperate existence in which fears for basic survival under the threat of nuclear destruction had become part of everyday life, to the point where a continued way of life without the constant fear of nuclear war is put into question.

⁴⁰⁷ Norbert Ney, '[Untitled poem]', in *Acht Minuten noch zu leben?*, ed. by Hans van Ooyen, p. 149.

Leading on from this negative outlook on the possibility of living or surviving under the constant threat of destruction, a similarly bleak perspective is in evidence in the collected poems with particular relevance to the German historical context, with specific comparisons between the prospective horrors of a threatened nuclear war and the remembered horrors of previous conflicts, most prominently the Second World War. From this, a common theme can be found in both of the two main collections regarding the cyclical nature of conflict, destruction, and forgetting. A clear example of this theme is shown in Michael Klaus's *Bei Friedensschluss* in the van Ooyen anthology:

“Ich habe Zeit”

Dachte der Krieg

Als er verjagt

Wurde

“ihr seid so

Vergeßlich”⁴⁰⁸

Similarly, *Was sind das für Zeiten* contains a number of reflections on the horrors of the past and the threat of repetition, most notably in Volker von Törne's piece *Zu Beginn der achtziger Jahre*, which includes the striking line ‘Der alte Schrecken geht einher in neuen Waffen’.⁴⁰⁹ With this conception of endless cycles of conflict, or at least, the threat of previous cycles coming around again, two key observations can be made regarding these works and

⁴⁰⁸ Michael Klaus, ‘Bei Friedensschluss’, in *Acht Minuten noch zu leben?*, ed. by Hans van Ooyen, p. 31.

⁴⁰⁹ Volker von Törne, ‘Zu Beginn der achtziger Jahre’, in *Was Sind Das Für Zeiten*, ed. by Hans Bender, p. 18.

their relation to wider circumstances. Firstly, the possibility of a return to the mass destruction and loss of life on a global scale, reinforced through very real contemporary events, showed a concern that despite the lessons apparently learned from the past and the years of relative peace, or at least the absence of direct warfare, the status quo in Europe was far from stable. Whether this could be threatened through Klaus's conception of the same mistakes being allowed to be repeated due to human forgetfulness, or von Törne's old horrors inflicted with new means, the end result of catastrophic war was presented as roughly the same.

Secondly, although the Second World War is not always specifically referred to, the implication cannot be ignored that Klaus's spirit of war which had been chased away only to threaten to return as well as the old horrors in von Törne's imagining are heavily based on the remainders and cultural memories of this catastrophic conflict, again framing the possible destruction brought about by a future Third World War not as an abstract concept, but rather as a real threat, with destructive consequences framed with knowable, relatable reference points.

This reflection on past destruction and the atrocities committed under the Nazi dictatorship draws an additional link between the potential loss of life in a nuclear war and the horrors of the Holocaust. This is included within the implications of the 'alte Schrecken' and the past mentioned in the above examples, and follows a wider trend with the introduction of the concept of a 'nuclear Holocaust' in public and political discourse. This was brought further forward by publications such as Karl-Heinz Janßen's use of the term to describe previous near-misses in the Cold War which had brought the world

‘an den Rand des nuklearen Holocaust’ in a 1980 *Zeit* article⁴¹⁰ as well as somewhat more alarmist views incorporated in works even beyond the West German context, including the British Sir Martin Ryle’s *Towards the Nuclear Holocaust*, which argues that the continuation of the Cold War would inevitably lead to such a scenario if left unchecked.⁴¹¹ This second perspective on the comparison of the Holocaust to nuclear war, as an immeasurable atrocity which must never be forgotten or repeated, is also evident in Norbert Ney’s *Dialektischer Fehler*:

Nach Auschwitz
 haben wir gehört,
 wir,
 die eben zu schreiben
 anfangen –
 nach Auschwitz
 sei kein Gedicht
 mehr möglich!

Wir schreiben Gedichte,
 aber wir sagen,
 wir sagen laut und
 so deutlich wir können:

Nein!

Aber nach *unseren* Gedichten

⁴¹⁰ Karl-Heinz Janßen, ‘Vor dem zweiten Kalten Krieg?’, *Die Zeit*, 1 November 1980, 3 edn <<http://www.zeit.de/1980/03/vor-dem-zweiten-kalten-krieg/komplettansicht>> [accessed 30 June 2014].

⁴¹¹ Martin Ryle, *Towards the Nuclear Holocaust*, 2nd edn (London: Menard Press, 1981).

Darf kein Auschwitz

Mehr möglich sein!⁴¹²

This comparison between the Holocaust and nuclear war is based on two key elements. Firstly, it acknowledges the far-reaching legacy of the atrocities of the past, showing that they remain relevant and pressing even in relation to contemporary discourses. Secondly, this perspective goes on to reject the conception that this legacy means an end to creative efforts or that no lessons could be learned from it. Instead, with a commitment to averting the resurgence of such atrocities, Ney presents a more positive perspective on the past than those shown in Klaus's and Fried's works examined above. Instead of forgetting and allowing the same events to reoccur as in the former conception, or being plagued by the past to the point of having no future as in the latter, this perspective favours an engagement with the horrors of the past in order to ensure that they cannot be repeated, and applies this to the newer threat of a potential nuclear conflict. Following this, the stated importance of '*unsere Gedichte*' in achieving this goal along with a firm belief in the impact of such texts suggests a moral obligation on the part of writers such as Ney himself to fulfil this role. Although the claim to be single-handedly responsible for preventing a repetition of these past horrors, or preventing a future nuclear war, may go beyond the practical capabilities of even the most actively engaged poet, and although Ney's perspective does not elaborate on how exactly such a preventative role should be put into effect, the willingness to engage with these themes and the moral obligations underpinning this attitude are further strengthened by this somewhat hyperbolic declaration.

⁴¹² Norbert Ney, 'Dialektischer Fehler', in *Acht Minuten noch zu leben?*, ed. by Hans van Ooyen, p. 28.

Along with these comparisons to the horrors of the Holocaust, comparisons between the threat of nuclear war and another catastrophic event in the Second World War are similarly evident in engaged poetry in this period, namely the nuclear bombardment of the Japanese cities of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. A prominent poetic example of the influence and relevance of this topic in relation to the threat of nuclear war in the 1980s can be found in the poetry readings in the 1982 Interlit conference examined in Chapter 6, namely the Japanese poet and survivor of the Hiroshima bombing Sadako Kurihara's *Ich will Zeugnis ablegen für Hiroshima*. This poem engages with similar themes to those analysed above, drawing on the destruction of the past in order to drive home its message, albeit with more explicit and vivid imagery than the more implicit references by Klaus, von Törne, or Ney, further reinforced by Kurihara's direct experience of the devastation wrought by nuclear weapons:

Wo je von der Hölle erzählt wird,
 in die ein Mensch einen Blick getan,
 und ich von neuen Schrecken erfahre,
 die der Höllenfürst wieder entfesseln will-
 wo immer davon die Rede ist,
 trete ich auf als Zeugin der Tragödie von Hiroshima
 um das ganze Elend zu schildern
 und aus Leibeskräften zu rufen:
 »Kein Krieg mehr auf Erden!«⁴¹³

⁴¹³ Sadako Kurihara, 'Ich will Zeugnis ablegen für Hiroshima', in *Es geht, es geht--*, ed. by Bernt Engelmann, p. 326.

Kurihara's engagement in the context of the West German peace movement in the 1980s was given an additional dimension by her history of debates surrounding the legacy of the Hiroshima bombing. While the destruction and scope of the Holocaust and the atomic bombings may not be directly comparable in themselves, a particularly direct public discussion of their impact was sparked during the 1960s by an article written by Kurihara entitled *On the Literature of Hiroshima: Auschwitz and Hiroshima*,⁴¹⁴ which as John Treat's analysis shows, encompassed debates not only over the similarities and contrasts in the two events' legacies, but also their representations in contemporary literature and the obligations of authors to address them.⁴¹⁵ In the article, Kurihara warns of the threat posed by the processes of dehumanisation which had underpinned both the Holocaust and the atomic bombings, and argues that this dehumanisation persisted with the continued development and plans for the use of nuclear weapons. Furthermore, Kurihara argues that an important role of writers centred on the recognition of this threat and opposition to it in public discourse, condemning other authors who preferred to avoid the political implications of this debate as 'drawing-room dilettantes' failing to fulfil this fundamental obligation.⁴¹⁶ Although the 1960 article and ensuing debate were primarily in a Japanese context, and certainly concerned a very different set of circumstances to the debates in the early 1980s centring on the European context, the fact that poets such as

⁴¹⁴ Sadako Kurihara, 'On the Literature of Hiroshima: Auschwitz and Hiroshima (Hiroshima No Bungaku Ni Megutte: Aushubittsu to Hiroshima)', *Chūgoku Shinbun*, 19 March 1960.

⁴¹⁵ John Whittier Treat, *Writing Ground Zero: Japanese Literature and the Atomic Bomb* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1995), p. 103.

⁴¹⁶ Treat, p. 104.

Kurihara and Makato Oda⁴¹⁷ writing on the subject of the atomic bombings were not only relevant but directly involved in the latter discourses such as their involvement in the Interlit '82 conference examined in chapter 6 reaffirms the importance of this theme.

Additionally, the engagement of numerous German-language poets with the Hiroshima bombing and its legacy along with its parallels with the horrors of the Holocaust such as Alf Tondern's *Hiroshima I*⁴¹⁸ further highlights the status of this catastrophic event in poetic discourse and relevance in the context of the Cold War, drawing on the destruction of the past in order to seek to prevent a repetition in the future. However, a further attitude towards the depiction of the catastrophe was also in evidence, focussing more on the prospect of future destruction as the end result of the continuation of contemporary political and military developments.

The first example of this more alarming and direct poetic engagement with prospective annihilation in the two anthologies at the centre of this analysis is Margarete Hannsmann's *Raketenherbst 1983*, which at first appears to take a particularly pessimistic view of both the looming threat of nuclear war and the efforts of the peace movement's protests to resist it:

mit ihren Händen wollen sie
die Kette bilden hundert Kilometer lang
als könnten sie verhindern

⁴¹⁷ Makoto Oda, 'Hiroshima', in *'Es geht, es geht--'*, ed. by Bernt Engelmann, p. 327.

⁴¹⁸ Alf Tondern, 'Hiroshima I', in *Acht Minuten noch zu leben?*, ed. by Hans van Ooyen, p. 25.

was vom Himmel fällt⁴¹⁹

With the explicit reference to peace protest actions such as human chains and the gloomy observation that such activities would ultimately be useless in the face of the outbreak of nuclear war, it would be easy to apply the criticism of fatalist 'Eiszeit- und Endzeitliteratur' in Hage and Fink's analysis to this work. However, Hannsmann's perspective also includes some degree of optimism, combined with the use of apocalyptic themes as warnings, showing the necessity of avoiding this catastrophe at all costs. While Hannsmann may question the ability of the assembled peace protesters to prevent the bombs falling from the sky, her recognition that these efforts were made and supported by such a number and wide variety of demonstrators united in their attempts to avoid this catastrophic scenario shows an element of hope, even when motivated by fear, and under the threat of nuclear destruction.

In addition to these themes of learning from the past and issuing warnings of prospective things to come, an additional perspective on the theme of fear and threats is also in evidence. While the works previously examined in this section focus on a nuclear exchange based on pre-planned strategies, the concept of an accidental apocalypse is also addressed. In a similar fashion to possible scenarios for the triggering of nuclear war through technical or human error such as the 'Ulm-Szenario' proposed by the Ulmer Ärzte-Initiative in order to demonstrate the possible effects of such a conflict on the West German civilian population,⁴²⁰ Peter Gerdes's *Der rote Knopf* emphasises the

⁴¹⁹ Margarete Hannsmann, 'Raketenherbst 1983', in *Acht Minuten noch zu leben?*, ed. by Hans van Ooyen, p. 90.

⁴²⁰ *Tausend Grad Celcius. Das Ulm-Szenario für einen Atomkrieg*, ed. by Ulmer Ärzte-Initiative (Darmstadt ; Neuwied, 1983).

absurdity of this possible turn of events by referring to the prospect of mass destruction in the most flippant terms possible:

Es war ein Irrtum.

Tut uns leid, ehrlich –

kann doch mal passieren, Leute.⁴²¹

By treating the outbreak of war as a minor accident through the accidental press of the titular red button, coupled with further insistences that ‘die Trümmer werden weggeräumt’ and the juxtaposition of total annihilation with a dismissive assurance that ‘die Lavawüste kühlt schon aus’, Gerdes’s dismissive tone highlights the final important aspect of the potential catastrophe in this period, in that the continually escalating tensions and strategic planning by both Eastern and Western blocs had brought the possibility of nuclear war closer than ever before, to the point where the errant press of a button or similar minor error could have destroyed the world. In addition, Gerdes’s use of apocalyptic imagery serves to further engage with the magnitude of the threat, with the poetic imagination of desolated wastelands of lava and cities reduced to nothing more than rubble being used to allow readers to envisage the unimaginable horror of nuclear war.

A final perspective on the threat of nuclear war is expressed in another entry in van Ooyen’s anthology, using a slightly less conventional perspective to convey its meaning. In Gerd Puls’s *Tilt*, an arcade game is used to highlight the terrible logic and futility of nuclear war, along with the threat posed by these mechanics:

⁴²¹ Peter Gerdes, ‘Der rote Knopf’, in *Acht Minuten noch zu leben?*, ed. by Hans van Ooyen, p. 161.

Eine Mark in den Automaten gesteckt
 den tödlichen Strahlen
 des Lasers zu folgen
 wieder und wieder
 und noch einmal
 addiert das Zählwerk
 WAHNSINN⁴²²

Although not specifically identified in the text, Puls's description bears a striking resemblance to the 1980 arcade game *Missile Command*,⁴²³ most particularly in the mechanic of constant repetition leading to eventual, inevitable failure. Thus, instead of simply entertaining players, the narrative mechanics are used to impart a similar sense of futility to that of *Tilt*, as is reflected in the final lines of the poem:

im letzten Spiel
 alles verloren⁴²⁴

As with Hannsmann's poem, the negative message of Puls's work is clearly in evidence. However, the threatened destruction both in *Tilt* and its immediate subject also serves as an even more direct warning than *Raketenherbst 1983*. Focussing on the impossibility of victory and the certainty of absolute failure from the moment that missiles were launched adds to the sense of futility of such a situation along with a justified sense of fear at the prospect of its realisation, and further stresses the necessity of not allowing the situation to develop to that point by presenting both the inevitability and

⁴²² Gerd Puls, 'Tilt', in *Acht Minuten noch zu leben?*, ed. by Hans van Ooyen, p. 67.

⁴²³ Atari, Inc., 'Missile Command', 1980. Video game.

⁴²⁴ Puls, p. 67.

madness of the catastrophic consequences of such a conflict. Additionally, the banality of the experience, represented in the act of paying for and playing an arcade game portraying the end of the world in nuclear war reinforces the pervasiveness of this threat, along with its encroachment into everyday existence.

8.1.2. The everyday

The second theme featured prominently across a variety of poems in this period concerns the more relatable factor of everyday existence and the intrusion of militaristic and political issues into it. As the previous section has showed, one of the foremost fear-inducing aspects of *Untergrund* lies in the uncanny presence of threatening military ordinance in natural spaces or areas in which such a threat should not belong, as Höllerer argues. However, another perspective on these spaces is also given, in relation to a more mundane, relatable existence:

MX und SFS 20, Pershing sitzt im Märchenwald,

im Westerwald, im Sauerland, im Fläming auch, wer weiß,

demnächst

und warte, balde bist auch du-

Tritt leis, es tickt. Es zuckt ungut.⁴²⁵

With the mention of these specific regions, the threatening presence of the violent apparatus of strategic planning is framed not only as an intrusion of armaments into natural spaces, but also into familiar areas, the implied

⁴²⁵ Höllerer, p. 50.

peacefulness of which contrasts sharply with the potential violence under them. The fact that these military installations are concealed further emphasises this dichotomy between the visible and the potential. In contrast with conventional armaments and structures, which make their presence felt in overt ways such as the construction of military bases and restricted zones, Höllerer argues that the concealment of these nuclear weapon platforms provides a more insidious form of threat, with areas as seemingly innocent as the woodlands and hills mentioned above also being used to conceal enormous sources of danger, both in terms of the missiles being launched towards other locations, and the regions themselves becoming targets for pre-emptive or retaliatory strikes from the other side.

A further juxtaposition between idyllic civilian existence and the potential violence of nuclear arsenals can be found in the sense of uncertainty put forward towards the end of the poem. In pondering 'wer weiß' where else such weapons may be deployed, or to where this military presence could spread next, along with offering the advice to tread lightly for fear of disturbing what lies underground, Höllerer makes the final point that the potential violence of nuclear weapons and their deployment need not be recognised or even visible in order to intrude into everyday existence.

The contrast of the threat of violence and everyday existence and the associated problems of how to act in the face of this duality is also examined in a number of other poems in the two collections, and plays a particularly important role in Gisela Schalk's *Sicherheiten*, which contemplates preparations for war undertaken in its protagonist's cellar:

Strahlensicher vier Meter

Unter der Erde

Ich stapel meine Konserven

Für die errechneten restlichen

Sechsendvierzig Jahre meines Lebens

Und fühle mich

Bombensicher⁴²⁶

In a similar way to *Untergrund*, the potential destruction of a nuclear war is presented as a pervasive threat contrasting with everyday existence, in this case inspiring particular actions and preparations for the continuation of some semblance of an ordinary life even in the event of catastrophe. This is represented in a particularly striking example of something as mundane as neatly stacking canned food – purchased from Aldi in the opening stanza of the poem – having its meaning transformed by the possibility of war. Instead of being presented as the regular task of grocery shopping, the food in question is transformed into stockpiled provisions intended to ensure basic survival. In this context, the environment of a cellar is also framed differently, changing from a relatively common and unremarkable storage space into a pseudo-bunker, providing shelter from the explosions and radiation which would have been the inevitable result of the anticipated conflict. Furthermore, this transformative process appears to reflect an internalised, voluntary version of the encroachment of militarised landscapes and spaces into civilian life

⁴²⁶ Gisela Schalk, 'Sicherheiten', in *Acht Minuten noch zu leben?*, ed. by Hans van Ooyen, p. 93.

examined previously. This occurs not in the sense of actual military or governmental intervention, but rather on the part of the civilian protagonist of the poem, who reacts to the intrusion of militaristic threats into everyday existence and an associated lack of safety by transforming a portion of her own home into a simulacrum of a militarised place of security.

In an additional parallel with Höllerer's poem, *Sicherheiten* also emphasises the importance of underground spaces. However, while the former frames this as a source of threat and unease, the latter appears to invert this meaning. The position of being four metres below ground is presented as 'Strahlensicher', and is therefore presented as the only possibility of safety from nuclear attack. This is particularly relevant in the context of the eight minutes' warning in the anthology's title, as the possibility of rushing to the safety of one's own cellar is somewhat more feasible than many other courses of action in such an event. However, the perspective on this security presented in the poem is far from positive. A previous section of the poem deals with the reactions of a range of subjects in relation to the threat of nuclear war, and their actions inspired by this, whether in removing themselves from potential target areas or attempting to avert this conflict or its destructive effects through protest:

Bettina ist unterwegs

Unterwegs nach Findhorn

Schorst ist unterwegs

Unterwegs zu einer Antikriegs-Demo

Marianne ist unterwegs

Unterwegs zu einem Häusermakler

[...]

Ich bin auch unterwegs

Unterwegs in meinen Keller⁴²⁷

Instead of attempting to avert catastrophe, protest against militarisation, or remove herself from the threatened situation, Schalk's protagonist seeks to ensure that her normal life could continue along more or less as usual, even while making preparations for a catastrophic conflict. With the destructive potential of nuclear weapons and subsequent threats such as radioactive fallout which would inevitably follow in the aftermath of such a war, the protagonist's plan does not appear particularly appealing. Even in the best case scenario, Schalk implies an isolated existence, restricted to a cellar in the ruins of a formerly comfortable everyday existence, surviving on tinned provisions 'für die errechneten restlichen | Sechsendvierzig Jahre meines Lebens'. While this may be preferable to instant death in the event of nuclear war, the conception of being safe from the harm threatened by the bombs due to these home preparations appears somewhat disingenuous.

With this in mind, the eponymous safeties in Schalk's poem appear to be more concerned with assuaging fears in the present rather than ensuring safety in the future, particularly when compared to the more active courses of action seen in its other subjects. This therefore serves to distinguish the position of the poem's protagonist from that of its author, as the futility of hiding from the prospect of nuclear devastation is contrasted with the active

⁴²⁷ Gisela Schalk, p. 92.

attempts to raise awareness and engage with the threat of war. In this context, the act of writing and publishing the poem itself shows Schalk's attitude as having more in common with the active protester than the cellar inhabitant.

Additionally, these preparations are presented as a response to the juxtaposition of militarisation and violence with everyday existence, ironically by introducing additional pseudo-military preparations into the protagonist's home. This intrusion was not however limited to physical signs of militarisation making their presence felt in everyday living spaces. In addition to these more direct forms of encroachment, the social and economic influence of increasing militarisation is also brought into question, particularly in the case of *Acht Minuten*. A particularly striking example of this can be found in Wolf Peter Schnetz's *Belial*, which presents the expansion of military spending as problematic:

Auch ohne Krieg

morden die besseren

Waffen

fressen Millionen

Milliarden

Dollar⁴²⁸

With this conception of the economic impact of preparations for waging war, another aspect of anti-militaristic protest is revealed. With the

⁴²⁸ Wolf Peter Schnetz, 'Belial', in *Acht Minuten noch zu leben?*, ed. by Hans van Ooyen, p. 79.

observation of the millions or billions of dollars consumed by military projects, two key lines of protest are incorporated into Schnetz's poem. Firstly, the poem argues that too much funding had already been given to such military projects, both for conventional and nuclear weapons, and that this commitment to the military-industrial complex was running out of control, becoming 'Ein gefräßiger, ein | unersättlicher Riese' which resulted in an array of risks and negative consequences even without the outbreak of war.⁴²⁹ This visceral imagery goes beyond portraying military concerns as a drain on government budgets, and presents the overgrown military as an active, threatening monster, devouring resources to feed its own insatiable greed, regardless of whether or not it was actually involved in fighting the wars which justified its existence in the first place.

Secondly, and equally worryingly, Schnetz presents the problem that rampant military spending also served to take funding away from other areas where it could serve a more useful purpose:

jede Sekunde

verhungert ein Mensch

auf dieser Erde

jede Sekunde

opfert

der blaue Planet

20 000 Dollar

⁴²⁹ Schnetz, p. 79.

für unsere Rüstung⁴³⁰

This direct comparison between military spending and potential other uses for such funding was a common theme in many poems from this period, such as Johann-Günter König's *Trefflich* in the same anthology. In a similar way to Schnetz, König draws a direct comparison between a costly military exercise and another possible use for this amount of money:

Vier Schuß aus dieser

155-mm-Feldhaubitze

Feuern einen Lehrer:

sie verpulvern sein Jahresgehalt.⁴³¹

With both *Belial* and *Trefflich*, the argument is clearly made that military spending and the preparations for a possible war were not only wasteful, but actively harmful for society. This attitude was shared by numerous other groups across the wider peace movement, as was evidenced by the widespread protest actions, blockades, and rhetorical opposition to military bases, convoys, and other symbols of military presence in West Germany examined in Chapters 2 and 5. The contextualisation of oppositions to military spending and military presence in everyday terms demonstrates a juxtaposition between civilian and military domains. While the revelation that firing a 155mm howitzer shell cost thousands of marks may have appeared somewhat abstract, or deliver the simple message that such munitions were remarkably

⁴³⁰ Schnetz, p. 79.

⁴³¹ Johann-Günter König, 'Trefflich', in *Acht Minuten noch zu leben?*, ed. by Hans van Ooyen, p. 59.

expensive, the vivid imagery of the yearly salary of a teacher being sent up in smoke provides a much more direct, relatable message.

Finally, on the subject of the economic and social intrusions of militarisation, the heavy emphasis on this theme in *Acht Minuten* was by no means coincidental. As the text was published in the GDR for an East German readership with a specific emphasis on the West German peace movement, it is hardly surprising that a particular perspective on the nature of the West German state is put forward, and the issue of peace protests in the Federal Republic is presented in more direct terms of opposition between the state and its citizens than in the more general thematic terms outlined in the *Bender* collection. This can be seen in van Ooyen's foreword, which emphasises the dangers posed by 'moderner Lenkwaffen in West und Ost' and other apparatus of the Cold War, followed by a distinction made between the state and its civilian population:

Auch in der BRD, dem – gemessen an Fläche und Einwohnerzahl – am meisten hochgerüsteten Staat der Erde, hat sich in den letzten Jahren eine nach Millionen zählende Friedensbewegung entwickelt.⁴³²

Thus, even though the anthology was published several years after the highpoint of the peace movement's protest activities and subsequent diversification, the mass mobilisation achieved by the movement is held as a sign of resistance to militarisation regardless of government policies. Because of this distinction between the West German state and its citizens, it is hardly surprising that the anthology's editorial choices serve to place somewhat more

⁴³² Ooyen, p. 5.

emphasis on this economic form of everyday intrusion than others. However, this does not mean that the opposition was in any way invalid, or invented by van Ooyen for this express purpose. As the above analysis has shown, these concerns were very real, and were reflected by both engaged poets and protesters across the peace movement in this period. The fact that it may have coincided with some of *Acht Minuten*'s own agenda and therefore received slightly more attention in this anthology does not undermine this importance.

In addition to the intrusion of militarisation into the realities of everyday existence, one further way in which the juxtaposition of war and normal life was engaged with in poetic terms came in the form of potential war scenarios, envisaging the outbreak of war from the perspective of normal people caught up in it. An excellent example of this can be seen in Peter Schütt's *Wie der Krieg begann*:

Der Dritte Weltkrieg, der letzte,
brach am 13. März aus, während der Geburtstagsfeier
für Tante Amalie.⁴³³

While the explanation that this third world war would indeed be the last alludes to similarly devastating themes examined previously, the contextualisation of these events within a family setting serves to highlight the disconnect between ordinary life and the waging of war. This is further reinforced by the immediate reactions of the party guests, who are divided into

⁴³³ Peter Schütt, 'Wie der Krieg begann', in *Acht Minuten noch zu leben?*, ed. by Hans van Ooyen, p. 77.

two camps. The former seeks to retreat into the normality of everyday life, as can be seen in the following reaction:

Zwei Nachbarn protestierten
 gegen den ohrenbetäubenden Lärm
 der über das Dorf hinwegdonnernden Starfighter.⁴³⁴

While the act of protesting against war is framed as a reasonable response, the fact that this expectation is subverted and replaced with the mundane issue of a noise complaint shows this retreat into the everyday. While the political questions of a world war and the imminent catastrophe of nuclear conflict are presented as huge issues requiring complex examination, the issue of noisy aircraft flying over a village is something more immediately striking. The implication in Schütt's poem is therefore that the neighbours cling to this more familiar issue because the larger and more troubling problems are simply too large to face in their own right. The other group of reactions however takes the opposite approach, enthusiastically jumping into tactical analysis:

Von der Kaffeetafel rückten sie aus
 ins atomare Schlachtfeld. Sie richteten
 ihre Pershings auf Moskau und Leningrad⁴³⁵

With this divide between the armchair generals and the horrific realities of an actual nuclear war, the final sense of contrast between everyday existence and militarisation is highlighted in the poem. While the previous group seeks to turn away from all but the most mundane aspects of a conflict, Schütt's

⁴³⁴ Schütt, p. 77.

⁴³⁵ Ibid.

second group turns it into something of a game, imagining that the entire mess could easily be resolved if only they could be placed in charge of things. In either case however, the actions take place within a comfortable domestic environment, while the war itself is transformed into something distant, almost unreal, and approachable only through familiar lines of thinking, as a noise issue or as a thought experiment. Therefore, in both cases, the problem of war intruding into everyday existence, even in the event of an actual outbreak of war, is solved by effectively refusing to accept the unfamiliar elements of such an intrusion.

The final way in which everyday existence is contrasted with the intrusive elements of war and anti-war protest can be found in a more introspective sense in Elisabeth Borchers's *Der Alltägliche*:

Nur schreibend bist du ein Dichter

nur so.⁴³⁶

With this conception, it is not the factor of war itself which is presented as a problematic intrusion into everyday existence, but rather the problem of engagement in the name of peace and the poet's place in relation to this. However, while Borchers's conception of this process places the poet's engagement and the act of writing as something beyond the normality of everyday existence, this role has a much wider range of perspectives and representations, along with debates surrounding the legitimacy of this form of writing, which the following section will examine.

⁴³⁶ Elisabeth Borchers, 'Der Alltägliche', in *Was sind das für Zeiten*, ed. by Hans Bender, p. 64.

8.2. Engaged literature and aesthetics

In addition to the themes which defined the subject matter for a variety of the poems from the period in question, a deeper issue can be found in relation to the status of the poetic works and their creators, not only in relation to the specific poems examined thus far, but also to the extent of calling into question the legitimacy of politically engaged poetry itself. This debate and the factors within it were by no means limited to the subject of peace poetry of the context of the early 1980s. However, the highly charged political atmosphere and wider trends within West German literature and literary criticism combined to turn this period into a flashpoint for this debate. The first of these factors with particular importance in the context of these poems lies with the debate surrounding the role of the poet.

8.2.1. The role of the poet

A number of specific functions of both engaged literature and its authors are shown in the poems analysed in this chapter. However, unlike some of the more public-focussed roles examined previously, the majority of the poems and poets at the centre of this chapter's analysis are almost exclusively concerned with the engagement of writers in their professional, literary capacity, emphasising the written word and its influence in defining the roles of the engaged poet. Therefore, while the literary roles of writers are somewhat narrower than the forms of public engagement analysed in previous chapters, a number of distinct and at times conflicting roles and obligations can be found in the pieces of engaged writing in question, corresponding with the varied roles of writers put forward in Chapter 4.

The first of these expected roles of writers concerns their detachment from political and social issues, thereby avoiding Benda's *trahison des clercs* by remaining solely focussed on appropriate areas of artistic and scholarly expression. While the examples of politically engaged poetry examined in this chapter are opposed to the strict definition of this expectation to avoid any form of engagement, the issues of critical distance and appropriate areas of expertise for writers and poets in particular remain relevant.

This focus on literary work as the appropriate area of expertise is particularly evident in relation to Borchers's perspective in *Der Alltägliche*, examined at the end of the previous section, stating that 'Nur schreibend bist du ein Dichter'.⁴³⁷ This draws a dividing line not only between everyday existence and active engagement, but also between literary and other forms of engagement in public and political affairs. Borchers thus reaffirms the importance of engaged writing, but at the same time portrays literature as the singular area of professional expertise for writers, in contrast to the broader perspectives on possible forms of engagement put forward in the context of the public demonstrations and conferences examined in previous chapters. This assertion, coupled with the addendum 'nur so' therefore draws a parallel with the detached expectations of excluding other potential forms of engagement or activity as going beyond the real function of a poet, but in contrast with Benda's perspective that writers should therefore avoid political engagement altogether, Borchers and other engaged writers examined in this chapter put forward an implicit positional obligation to use this expertise in order to engage with political and social issues through their literary work.

⁴³⁷ Elisabeth Borchers, 'Der Alltägliche', in *Was sind das für Zeiten*, ed. by Hans Bender, p. 64.

A second expected role of engaged writers is also partially fulfilled in terms of poets speaking for others and using their works in a representative capacity. On the one hand, the role of engaged writers speaking on behalf of others is challenged through the theme of solidarity between poets and demonstrators, along with a wider sense of common aims between literary and direct protest. This can be seen equally in the protest songs and poetry readings which were included in numerous peace protests throughout the period in question, along with the depictions of poets and protesters within the poems. Whether in the sense of representing the active efforts of protesters, for instance in Hannsmann's *Raketenherbst 1983*⁴³⁸ and Höllerer's *Sicherheiten*⁴³⁹ examined above, or in the inclusion of 'us' and 'our' efforts representing both poets and protesters in a variety of works, including the common personal risks outlined in Ulrich Straeter's *Jedem das Seine*,⁴⁴⁰ and the common fate awaiting both groups in the event of their causes failing, along with all other victims caught in the destruction of a nuclear war, as put forward in Günter Kunert's depiction of people helplessly awaiting their imminent end in *Vor der Sintflut*:

Denn die Erde versinkt
 hinter ihrem Horizont
 nichts geht mehr auf
 das ist klar
 und es bleibt
 ein fahriger Widerschein
 von uns allen
 noch eine Weile

⁴³⁸ Hannsmann, p. 90.

⁴³⁹ Gisela Schalk, p. 92.

⁴⁴⁰ Ulrich Straeter, 'Jedem das Seine', in *Acht Minuten noch zu leben?*, ed. by Hans van Ooyen, p. 43.

bestehen⁴⁴¹

In either case, the recognition of a shared moral obligation between poet and protester, and between poet and audience is strongly emphasised. With the concept of a shared political and social environment, along with the prospect of a shared catastrophe as a consequence of avoiding engagement, these perspectives therefore present a generalised moral obligation to act, independent of poets' and others' respective areas of expertise.

On the other hand, these shared moral obligations do not mean that individuals' areas of expertise are ignored, or that distinctions between poets and other protesters in terms of positional capabilities or corresponding positional obligations are done away with completely. Along with this shared moral obligation, a common element underpinning a variety of calls for and acknowledgements of engagement are centred on the specific positional obligations of the poets writing them. This is particularly evident in the poems examined in Section 8.1.3., dealing with everyday scenarios. While poets such as Schütt and Schalk base their writing in domestic terms which remain familiar to non-poets, the ability of these figures to have their perspectives on everyday existence and the intrusion of military and political matters into it seen by a wider audience and thereby contribute to public discourse show a representative function on their part. Thus, even when writing on everyday themes shared by many other citizens, the position of the engaged poet retains an element of speaking on behalf of others whose voices would not be heard on the same scale. Therefore, the engagement of these poets in terms of representation can be seen to be justified by two sets of obligations, with

⁴⁴¹ Günter Kunert, 'Vor der Sintflut', in *Was sind das für Zeiten*, ed. by Hans Bender, p. 80.

shared moral obligations expressed through solidarity with protesters and other citizens, while at the same time a specific representative capacity is reinforced through the positional obligations of poets to speak on behalf of those same citizens who are not in a position to have their voices heard.

In a similar fashion to the representative capabilities and obligations of engaged poets, the role of writers as a moral authority can also be seen in the use of engaged poets' public positions. In relation to the issue of threat in particular, this function is combined with the additional expected role of writers to bear witness to troubling developments and past events, using the status as a moral authority to reinforce and add legitimacy to expressed concerns. As was touched on in Section 8.1.2., this was particularly evident in relation to themes of devastating threats, such as bearing witness to horrors in previous wars such as Kurihara's *Ich will Zeugnis ablegen für Hiroshima*⁴⁴² or Ney's *Dialektischer Fehler*,⁴⁴³ both of which play heavily on the importance of literary witness aimed at avoiding the forgetfulness which could lead to the repetition of these atrocities. However, the importance of bearing witness is not limited to this function alone. In addition to the more objective roles of writing for posterity and providing exterior critique examined in chapter 4, the more directly engaged forms of poetry seen here also reveal a more subjective, directly involved testimonial. *Dialektischer Fehler* provides an effective demonstration of this with its affirmation of the importance of using 'unseren Gedichten' to prevent a reoccurrence of the horrors of Auschwitz.⁴⁴⁴ With this

⁴⁴² Engelmann, *Berliner Begegnung*, and others, p. 236.

⁴⁴³ Ney, 'Dialektischer Fehler', p. 28.

⁴⁴⁴ *Ibid.*

ending, three important aspects of bearing witness through literary means are highlighted.

Firstly, the poem reaffirms the importance of written works in preserving the memories of the horrors of the past. Even for those such as Ney who had not experienced these atrocities first-hand, the importance of bearing witness to their legacy is further emphasised.

Secondly, as was shown in Section 8.1.1., the use of these written works in preventing a repetition of these atrocities is underlined, with particular relevance to the looming prospect of a nuclear war.

Finally, Ney's emphasis on 'our' poems in achieving this goal presents a more subjective, personal perspective on this act of bearing witness, along with a positional obligation to do so. Thus, Ney's poem not only reinforces the necessity of bearing witness through literary work in order to remember the past and to prevent future atrocities, but also serves as a call to other poets to fulfil both a general moral obligation as well as a specific positional obligation as a moral authority to do this, presenting the prevention of a future Auschwitz as the goal of engaged poetry, and simultaneously presenting his fellow engaged poets as the only figures with the necessary expertise and status to achieve this.

The justifications for engagement in terms of moral authority and bearing witness do not however go unchallenged. In Hans Magnus Enzensberger's *Gewaltverzicht*, the necessities of bearing witness and calling out issues in relation to war and peace are presented as significantly less clear

than in the morally oriented appeals by poets such as Ney and Kurihara, particularly in relation to unfolding events:

Wer davon ein Bewußtsein davon hat
 hat ein Bewußtsein davon
 und sonst gar nichts. Beweislast
 in Mülltüten. Greisenhaftes
 als Neuerscheinung.⁴⁴⁵

With this, Enzensberger presents a more complex perspective on the act of bearing witness. Instead of portraying the poet as an inspired figure, charged with the positional obligations of furthering historical impulse and preventing the development of unfolding events from slipping into catastrophe, this work emphasises the complexities of the situation, noting that even the engaged individuals with some degree of awareness were unlikely to have the clear perspective necessary for the testimonies which they aspired to provide. Additionally, Enzensberger's criticisms of unfounded claims and bad works appearing as a result of attempts to fulfil these morally charged roles further demonstrates the problematic nature of this position and its associated obligations. Nonetheless, even when these functions of moral authority and bearing witness were supported by questionably solid evidence or reasoning, the self-representation of poets in these works in relation to this act remains important. Even in cases where poetic works were of limited success or influence, the goals of bearing witness and acting in support of moral ideals

⁴⁴⁵ Hans Magnus Enzensberger, 'Gewaltverzicht', in *Acht Minuten noch zu leben?*, ed. by Hans van Ooyen, p. 47.

and obligations as motivating factors and elements of discussion remain an important aspect of the self-determined roles of engaged poets.

The final expected role of writers which is used as a justification for engagement by the poets examined in this chapter concerns these figures' irritant function and critique of power. An excellent example of this can be found in Hugo Ernst Käufer's *Solange wir fragen*:

solange wir fragen

auf Antworten beharren

verunsichern wir die Mächtigen

beim Ausverkauf der Zukunft

stören wir die Fallensteller

beim Vermarkten unsrer Träume⁴⁴⁶

Käufer's handling of this irritant role simultaneously highlights the importance of speaking out and performing this role, and puts forward the positional obligation of writers to do so. Käufer argues that the most pressing concern lies with the selling out of a possible future by those in power and that the most effective way for individuals such as him to counteract these developments is not to take actions as drastic as revolution, or even necessarily to organise direct political opposition, but rather to use their position as public figures and the influence of their literary works to ask difficult questions, and thereby act as a destabilising influence on otherwise unchallenged processes.

⁴⁴⁶ Hugo Ernst Käufer, 'Solange wir fragen', in *Acht Minuten noch zu leben?*, ed. by Hans van Ooyen, p. 106.

Interestingly, Käufer's poem does not use poetic forms in order to pose questions of its own, and instead presents a set of direct, discursive statements regarding the respective roles of poets and the status quo. Nonetheless, the stated importance and underlying obligations of engaged poets taking on this irritant, questioning role remains central to this perspective, even without providing an example of this role in the poem.

Moreover, with the wide range of possible questions proposed in this poem 'nach dem Wie und Warum | nach dem Jetzt und Später',⁴⁴⁷ the nature of the questions themselves appears to be an issue of only secondary importance. Instead, Käufer implies that the most pressing concern is that the questions are asked in the first place, with the necessary prominent status and persistence to ensure that they could not be ignored. As such, this poem shows a parallel with a number of the peace movement's more diverse public demonstrations and mass mobilisation actions. As was examined in Chapter 5, these large-scale protests brought together diverse groups with often widely divergent agendas and ideological bases, but their collaboration and willingness to contribute towards mass demonstrations greatly strengthened the movement as a whole during its early phases. Thus, in the same way that public protest was supported by a wide array of groups and individuals, the pertinent and persistent questioning of all kinds across publicly recognised literary works was an important manifestation of discontent.

This irritant role is similarly exemplified in Ernst Jandl's *Wissen, sagen*, which draws comparisons between the roles of poets and other artists.

⁴⁴⁷ Hugo Ernst Käufer, 'Solange wir fragen', in *Acht Minuten noch zu leben?*, ed. by Hans van Ooyen, p. 106.

In contrast to the musicians, dancers, and architects, all of whom are portrayed as professionals with distinct areas of expertise and means for fulfilling their intended roles, Jandl puts forward a less clearly defined role for poets and their works:

hingegen die poeten mit ihren wörtern
 wissen diese was sie sagen
 was sie mit ihren wörtern in wahrheit sagen
 wissen das jemals die poeten⁴⁴⁸

Thus, the role of poets imagined by Jandl is more concerned with the reflexive role of observing, commenting and critiquing through the use of the written word, rather than the exact means by which these words are used. Unlike Ney's call to action, Jandl's poem does not call for direct or active political engagement. Instead, the act of writing poetry is portrayed as inherently involved with the poet's surroundings, meaning that any form of published work in some way contributes to provoking and furthering public discussion of issues and at times uncomfortable truths which could otherwise have gone unnoticed.

8.2.2. The legitimacy of politicised writing

In addition to the question of the role of poets in relation to the peace movement and political engagement in general, the final element of the influence and importance of these poems is the debate surrounding their legitimacy and aesthetic status as works of engaged literature.

⁴⁴⁸ Ernst Jandl, 'Wissen, sagen', in *Was sind das für Zeiten*, ed. by Hans Bender, p. 60.

The question of legitimacy and the overall state of West German literature was brought into particularly sharp focus during the 1980s by criticisms of the prevailing trends in the field, most notably with Hans Magnus Enzensberger's scathing critique '*Meldungen vom lyrischen Betrieb*', first published in the *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung* in 1989. Enzensberger assesses West German poetry in general and the contents of *Was sind das für Zeiten* in particular to deliver an overwhelmingly negative judgement:

In der Literatur haben Prognosen nichts zu suchen. Die Poesie entzieht sich jedem Wahrscheinlichkeitskalkül, und ein paar unerhörte Ziele reichen hin, den trostlosesten Befund zu widerlegen. Allerdings, der Postbote, der mir mit lyrischen Sendungen den Briefkasten verstopft, flößt mir nicht Hoffnung sondern Schrecken ein.⁴⁴⁹

With this, Enzensberger expresses his horror at the state of poetry in the 1980s, adding that there was a single sense of cold comfort in the idea that the art form as a whole would likely be able to recover in time from 'nicht nur den Undank der Welt, sondern auch den blinden Eifer ihrer Anhänger' due to its weed-like resilience, if nothing else.

With criticisms of banal, uninspired poems, Enzensberger argues that these works fail to offer any indication of what is of central importance in life, or to articulate their thoughts in any original or engaging manner. In relation to the question of substance and effect however, a more deeply cutting criticism comes to the fore, in the sense that the attempts at handling political themes or political engagement were equally insubstantial:

⁴⁴⁹ Hans Magnus Enzensberger, *Scharmützel und Scholien: über Literatur*, ed. by Rainer Barbey (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 2009), p. 213.

Wenn die Verfasser schlichtweg keine Lust hätten, sich mit Politik zu beschäftigen, so wäre das ihre Sache; bedauerlich finde ich nur, daß sie Krieg und Frieden zur pfarrerhaften Phrase reduzieren.⁴⁵⁰

While Enzensberger disagrees with the concept of general obligations for writers or editors to engage with socio-political issues, framing the question of engagement as a purely personal decision, his criticism outlines a distinct obligation to engage meaningfully with these issues if the decision to become engaged is taken. As such, Enzensberger argues that the lack of both substance and effect in these works, with half-hearted attempts at answering to political issues either as sanctimonious statements of purpose, or in empty, ‘entschieden unpolitisch’ terms constituted a failure to contribute meaningfully to further discussions in wider political or public discourses on the part of both individual writers and the editors who assembled collections such as *Was sind das für Zeiten*.

This criticism of ostensibly engaged poetry is taken further with a sceptical assessment of the reach and impact of any given poem, which concludes with the tongue-in-cheek ‘Enzensbergerische Konstante’ of ‘± 1354’, showing a decided lack of confidence in the ability of these works of poetry to reach larger audiences or to incite mass engagement with their messages.⁴⁵¹

An additional criticism levelled by Enzensberger against contemporary German poetry in the 1980s is linked to this factor of influence and wider

⁴⁵⁰ Enzensberger, *Scharmützel und Scholien*., p. 208.

⁴⁵¹ Ibid., p. 200.

effects, with what is categorised as a retreat from the rest of the world in terms of aesthetics and literary forms:

Zum einen haben es sich die deutschen Dichter der achtziger Jahre offenbar abgewöhnt, von der Außenwelt Notiz zu nehmen. Vermutlich wissen sie gar nicht, was heute in Polen oder Irland, in der Sowjetunion oder in den USA geschrieben wird. Ein Indiz dafür ist, daß sie bis auf wenige Ausnahmen nichts mehr übersetzen. Die Früchte dieser freiwilligen Provinzialisierung werden ohne Scheu, ja sogar mit einem gewissen Aplomb zur Schau getragen.⁴⁵²

The concern for this factor is mirrored in a number of contributions to the international conferences examined in Chapter 6, and overlaps with a similar argument by the Soviet poet Yevgeny Yevtushenko regarding the interconnected nature of the modern world and necessity of transnational perspectives, along with the similar risks of ignoring these factors in socio-political terms:

Im 19. Jahrhundert war es noch möglich, nur für die eigene Nation ein großer Schriftsteller zu sein. Wenn heute ein Schriftsteller nur nationale und nicht auch internationale Bedeutung hat, dann ist er auch ein schlechter nationaler Schriftsteller. Für einen großen afrikanischen Autor ist es unerlässlich, tiefes Verständnis für die europäischen Probleme zu haben, und ein großer europäischer Autor ist hilflos, wenn er die Leiden Afrikas nicht versteht.⁴⁵³

⁴⁵² Enzensberger, *Scharmützel und Scholien*, p. 212.

⁴⁵³ Engelmann, *Berliner Begegnung*, and others, p. 274.

Although Enzensberger's criticism centres on aesthetic provincialism while Yevtushenko focusses on political and social factors, a common theme is present in terms of international and interconnected lines of influence, with the prospect of West German poets and other writers failing to adapt and make the most of these connections being considered a failure to fulfil their literary roles.

However, a number of factors can also be identified which suggest that the situation in relation to the engaged poems in the early 1980s was not quite as dire as suggested. Firstly, the fact that events such as the pan-European gatherings at the Berliner Begegnungen and Haager Treffen, along with the truly global event of the Interlit 1982 conference took place and explicitly recognised the factor of international influence indicate that an awareness of the risks of isolationism and efforts to foster more open collaboration and dialogues on an international stage were very much in effect. Although the majority of these discussions focussed on the political messages and themes of the works in question rather than their aesthetics or literary form, the exchanges between contributors and aims of fostering further discussions indicate both an awareness of, and attempts to avoid both forms of problematic provincialism.

Similarly, the border defying topics such as the threats of the Cold War, nuclear weapons and concerns for the future examined in the previous section can be found in equal measure in the poetry engaged with the peace movement and in the transnational peace movement itself. Even if the examples of engaged poetry in the context of the peace movement were not sufficient to entirely assuage concerns for the voluntary provincialisation of German

literature, the nature of this engagement shows that the state of political poetry in this period was not entirely hopeless.

This is reflected in more general terms in Schnell's analysis of the West German literary field in the 1980s:

Bei aller Abgründigkeit, bei allem Pessimismus zeichnet diese Lyrik einer beschädigten Welt dennoch die Fähigkeit aus, mit ihren Wahrnehmungen und Empfindungen sich nicht im Bestehenden einzurichten, sondern über die Wirklichkeit, aus der sich sie hervorgeht, hinauszudeuten.⁴⁵⁴

In spite of the fears, threats, and other concerns which contributed to this generally pessimistic outlook, Schnell identifies a continued engagement with aesthetic values in West German literature in the 1980s. While Schnell's analysis focusses on the transcendence of existing issues more than the problems of the damaged world, the examples of political poetry examined in this chapter show similar attitudes. Whether in terms of applying poetic imagination to the unimaginably destructive potential of nuclear war in *der rote Knopf*, the faintly unsettling assurance of a figure preparing to survive such a conflict in their cellar-turned-bunker in *Sicherheiten*, or the somewhat more absurd account of the third and final world war breaking out during Aunt Amalie's birthday party in *Wie der Krieg begann*, a range of poems examined in this chapter combine their political messages and pessimistic outlooks with aesthetic ambition, providing unique, humanising perspectives on what could otherwise remain cold, inhuman topics. This therefore added a unique

⁴⁵⁴ Ralf Schnell, *Die Literatur der Bundesrepublik*, p. 320.

contribution of aesthetically conscious poetry to the discussions of the peace movement and its themes, adding both approachable, imaginative perspectives and direct, discursive protest statements to cause.

8.3. Summary

In summary, what insight can this analysis of peace poems provide in relation to the overarching question of writers' political engagement and obligation in the early 1980s?

The first important point regarding the poems within *Acht Minuten noch zu Leben?* and *Was sind das für Zeiten* is that these works and the prominent themes addressed within many of them reflect key trends within the literary zeitgeist in the period in question, particularly in relation to the Cold War and peace movement. These forms of literary engagement were further supported by a range of positional and moral obligations, which served to define and justify engaged poets' positions not only in terms of speaking out on current issues, but also in fulfilment of more general roles and expectations of writers.

Secondly, the threat of nuclear war and the debate surrounding the roles of poets in particular highlight a mixture of optimism and pessimism in relation to engaged poetry and its political context in this period. Whether in relation to the future of humanity and possible nuclear annihilation, or the more immediate questions of political or social influence, opinions were evidently divided, both in the poems themselves and in their surrounding discussions. This variation in interpretations also applied to the roles taken on by engaged poets. Although the majority of examples examined here

envisaged a useful role for poets and their expertise, opinions were somewhat divided on whether this expertise was best used by representing others by speaking on their behalf, upholding moral concerns, or providing warnings by bearing witness to troubling developments in their poems. Despite these varied perspectives however, these works consistently support the idea that the expertise and literary engagement of the poets in question provided unique contributions to the peace movement and its argumentation. Whether by bringing the issues of war and peace into more relatable terms, or applying poetic imagination to the prospect of nuclear war, the concept of making a distinct contribution to wider discussions of war and peace remained as relevant for the literary engagement of poets as any other forms of engagement examined in this thesis.

Finally, there were a number of parallels and shared ideas between the wider peace movement in the late 1970s and early 1980s, including active demonstrations, rhetoric, and contemporary engaged poetry. These took the form of inspirations from the same stimuli, but also with mutual influence between engaged poems and the wider movement. This is particularly evident in the shared themes of fear of nuclear war and its intrusions into everyday existence which were engaged with by the poems examined in this chapter as well as the other forms of engagement undertaken by writers and across the peace movement examined in the previous case studies. Although these poems often engaged with the themes in different ways to the mass protests, conferences, and organisational forms of engagement examined previously, their shared commitment to these concepts shows a similar sense of contributing to the themes and argumentation of the wider peace movement.

Thus, while these works and the obligations inspiring them may not have single-handedly changed the world or revolutionised perspectives on the topic of nuclear war, this singular form of influence was never their intention. Instead, these poems can be seen as a range of contributions to a larger whole, with both unique poetic engagement and direct political statements adding to the discussions, themes, and argumentation of the wider peace movement, thereby adding their unique voices and particular roles to the diverse spectra of groups and individuals which defined the movement.

9. Conclusions

To draw my thesis to a close, what conclusions can be drawn on writers' involvement with the peace movement in early 1980s? Although it has not been possible to examine every possible facet of this broad topic in my research, the four case studies I have chosen have provided a range of contexts and perspectives on engagement, which have allowed both specific analysis to be made and more general conclusions to be drawn from these results. To make these conclusions, it is first necessary to return to the two overarching questions which have defined the objectives of my research:

1. To what extent were obligations involved in defining and justifying writers' contributions to the West German peace movement in this period?
2. What distinct contributions did engaged writers make to the peace movement – either as individuals or as part of collective forms of engagement – based on these obligations?

Addressing these two key questions has been the primary objective of my thesis, and both my theoretical framework and case studies have provided insight into each of these issues. For the first question, the examples in my case studies have highlighted a broad range of obligations which defined and justified forms of writers' engagement, ranging from the specific to the universal, and from the cohesive to the divisive. These obligations have included the political, positional, and moral forms outlined in my theoretical framework, and have proved to be open to a surprising amount of interpretation in their application to the roles taken on by engaged writers in

this context. This lack of uniformity does not however diminish the influence of obligations on the roles, self-perceptions, or engagement of writers.

As for the second question, my research has examined a range of engaged writers' contributions to the peace movement, informed by a number of roles, expectations, and associated obligations. These contributions included unique forms of engagement which could only have been undertaken with the particular expertise and status of writers, and others which were more general, and used to support the mobilisation, themes, and ideals of the wider peace movement alongside other groups and individuals. In either case, these roles within the peace movement were contributory rather than leading, but were nonetheless made without engaged writers losing their identity or being entirely subsumed within the wider protest movement.

9.1. Obligations

As my theoretical framework put forward and the four case studies have reinforced, a range of positional, political, and moral obligations formed the basis for a similarly wide range of actions and positions in relation to the peace movement. Furthermore, as each of the case studies has shown, while a common element can be found in the perception of actions supported by obligations as necessary – either in personal terms or in relation to a higher cause – the factor of obligation was by no means a simple one, and often caused problems in its own right.

The first way in which obligations can be seen as equally supportive and problematic can be found in their relation to the status of engaged writers. As has been shown across each of the four case studies, these issues

predominantly concerned positional obligations, and revolved around the questions of which positional obligations should be taken on as central elements of engaged writers' prominent positions, and how these obligations should be interpreted and acted on.

This factor of choice in taking on and interpreting the obligations of engaged writers played a particularly important role in the discussions in the conferences analysed in Chapter 6 and the disputes within the VS in Chapter 7. From the varied arguments put forward, these case studies have demonstrated that roles and status of writers were not defined by a single universally accepted set of obligations. While the political, positional, and moral obligations examined in my thesis provided a defining influence on both the roles of engaged writers and the arguments used in their engagement, the interpretation of these forms of obligation applying in these contexts was a crucial prerequisite for this influence.

In the VS crisis in particular, both sides of the dispute were supported by perspectives on writers' positional obligations. These included opposition between interpretations of an obligation to exert political influence through public engagement set against a more insular perspective on the representation of writers in a professional capacity, as well as the broader issues of principle, with pragmatic attitudes on the necessity of compromise set against more idealistic perspectives, particularly on the issues of censorship and writers' rights in the Eastern bloc. However, these different interpretations of the status of engaged writers based on positional obligations was by no means limited to direct disputes. A wide range of perspectives on the status of writers was shown in both Chapter 5's analysis of prominent writers' roles within protest

actions and Chapter 6's analysis of writers' conferences in this period. Many of these interpretations focussed on different priorities, or were even wholly incompatible with each other, but a common element can nonetheless be found in the influence of positional obligations as both a foundation for this status and as a justification for the actions based on it.

While it may appear counterintuitive for a compelling force such as obligation to be subject to choice in its application, this conclusion is supported by the models of obligation and roles of writers examined in my theoretical framework. Unlike the obligations of a citizen, a judge, or a soldier, the obligations of an engaged writer are not legally codified or standardised. Therefore, the specific obligations associated with this role are subject to some degree of interpretation, as can be seen in the case study discussions. However, as my four case studies have demonstrated, once these obligations and their applicability are defined, their influence on the roles, self-perceptions, and activities of engaged writers is no less compelling or less valid than other forms, and fits with the other self-defined and negotiated aspects of the roles of writers outlined in my theoretical framework.

Leading on from these questions of status, a further instance of the underlying influence of writers' positional obligations lies in the question of expertise. My case studies have examined a variety of interpretations of writers' expertise and the obligations associated with its use in relation to the peace movement, ranging from the primary importance of literary engagement based on expertise with the written word in Chapter 8's analysis of engaged poetry, to discussions of writers' expertise in influencing public discourse in chapter 6, to contrasting perspectives on the involvement of writers in areas

outside their areas of expertise, such as Chapter 7's examination of the VS's organisational engagement. However, as with the issue of engaged writers' status, while a multitude of perspectives on the question of expertise were put forward across the contexts I have examined, a constant factor can be identified, in that these perspectives on writers' expertise served to outline a range of particular interpretations of writers' roles and positional obligations. Expertise in the use of the written and spoken word, or in influencing public discourse, were not only framed as the basis for writers' activities, but also carried with them an inherent positional obligation to use these areas of expertise in public engagement.

A further problematic area lies in the conflicts which arose between different sets of obligations, and the ways in which these conflicts were resolved – or at times, not resolved. As with the issue of writers' status, the four case studies have included instances in which conflicting obligations led to direct disputes between individuals, such as the VS crisis and the latter part of the writers' summit series analysed in Chapter 6. However, additional forms of conflict in terms of ideals and priorities were also in evidence, and were equally supported by opposing lines of obligations. These included conflicts between idealism and pragmatism, between aesthetics and direct engagement in creative works, and between individual and collective engagement, all of which were supported by political, positional, and moral obligations to a greater or lesser extent.

This does not however mean that all three categories of obligation were equally present on every side of each dispute. As my analysis has shown, different forms of obligation can be seen to have influenced different

perspectives in different ways, such as the generally universally oriented moral and positional obligations put forward in support of idealist positions, in contrast to the generally political and more specific positional obligations involved in pragmatic perspectives.

While some of the obligations examined in my case studies led to differing perspectives, many of the very same lines of obligation examined in my thesis were equally instrumental in resolving a number of these conflicts. In the cases of the protest actions analysed in Chapter 5 and the summits in Chapter 6 – at least, in the earlier stages of the summit series – conflicts between many specific, individually held obligations were effectively overridden by commitment to wider goals, specifically the contribution to the wider peace movement and the ideals of peace. I have therefore argued that the varied forms of obligation have acted as both divisive and cohesive elements in terms of writers' engagement.

I have argued that political, positional, and moral obligations remained a key driving force in the engagement of writers with the peace movement, from these figures' own definitions and justifications of their public actions to the argumentation and rhetorical techniques put forward in their engagement. Moreover, the existence of multiple forms and interpretations of obligations across the contexts examined here enhances rather than diminishes the importance of obligation.

My objective has not been to provide a single model for the role of obligation in writers' engagement, but rather to examine the complex and multi-faceted influence of the forms of obligation taken on by engaged writers

in the context of the peace movement. This influence of obligations on writers' engagement draws on Klosko's multiple principle in the definitions and justifications of political activities. While my application of models of obligation to writers' engagement with the peace movement has not revealed a singular form of obligation covering all contributions and forms of protest activity, this was not the intention of my analysis, nor should it be seen as a failing in the use of obligation as a theoretical model. As with the multiple, overlapping forms of obligation outlined by Klosko, the engaged writers examined in my four case studies made a range of distinct contributions to the wider peace movement across a range of contexts and forms of protest, and examining these actions in the context of obligation has revealed an even more varied array of obligations which played a central role both in the outlining of these protesting positions, and as a rhetorical tool in the argumentation used in these contributions, defining the contributions for both the writers themselves and the wider movement to which they contributed.

9.2. Roles of writers

While a variety of obligations had a direct influence on the engagement of writers with the West German peace movement in this period, concepts and interpretations of obligation also served to define and justify a number of more general writers' roles and expectations. As with the direct influence of obligations, my case studies have shown the key importance of the fulfilment of these roles and their underlying obligations in relation to both the self-presentation of engaged writers and external perceptions of them and their engagement.

My theoretical framework identified five key roles as having a defining influence on the status and public activities of writers, and my case studies have examined and at times challenged the relevance of these roles in the engagement of these figures across a range of contexts relating to the peace movement. Following the analysis of these roles in the specific case studies, what conclusions can be drawn concerning the influence of these roles and expectations of engaged writers in a more general sense?

In terms of detachment, the instances of engagement at the centre of my analysis have by definition been made in opposition to the expectation of total separation from social and political issues. In the strictest terms, all instances of writers' involvement with the peace movement could be considered to have abandoned the principle of detachment from social and political issues to some extent. This was taken to its furthest extent in the demonstrations examined in Chapter 5 and a number of the directly engaged poems in Chapter 8, as these forms of engagement allowed writers to overtly reject the principle of detachment in order to contribute directly to the actions and themes of the wider peace movement. Nevertheless, the issue of critical distance and the question of exactly how directly writers should involve themselves with the peace movement and protest politics were not uniformly resolved across the four case studies. From the direct involvement in protest actions, to the retention of a reserved status within the VS, to the varied discussions over writers' involvement with world issues in the summits, the question of detachment remained relevant, both for writers' engagement itself, and for the perceptions and presentation of these figures and the positional obligations

relating to their status as writers in relation to the other varied elements of the protest movement.

Leading on from these questions of detachment, the expected role of writers holding the authority to speak for others has similarly been interpreted in a variety of ways across the instances I have analysed. As the four case studies have shown, the representative capacity of engaged writers was often problematic, both in terms of the ability and the legitimacy of these figures to speak on others' behalf. Unlike the issue of detachment however, the forms of representation have varied from the symbolic representation of the wider population through contributions to protest actions and literary works, to the organisational representation of other writers on a more direct, personal basis. Likewise, the justifications for writers' claims to representative authority have also varied, from using their prominence and expertise in the use of language in order to speak for those whose voices would otherwise not be heard, to using their status in order to add legitimacy to others' actions, to the specific instance of organisational representation based on the political obligations in the structure of the VS. However, in spite of these varied interpretations of the specifics of representative roles, the general tone of writers' authority to speak for others seen in the case studies can be seen to reflect the principles put forward in Chapter 4's theoretical outline, namely that engaged writers' authority to speak for others stemmed from the position of these individuals to have their voices heard in public discourse, and the associated positional obligations to put this position to good use. Moreover, this representative role can be seen as a negotiated authority, with groups such as the mass mobilised protesters in Chapter 5 only effectively being represented by engaged writers

to the extent that they agreed these figures spoke on behalf of their views and interests. Accordingly, as the debates in Chapters 6 and 7 showed, the legitimacy of this authority could be contested, and in the case of the VS crisis in particular, rescinded entirely in the case of a breakdown between representatives.

The question of moral authority proved to be similarly varied, although less directly problematic in terms of representative legitimacy. As I outlined in my theoretical framework, the question of moral authority on the part of writers is based in a general engagement with moral issues supported by equally general moral obligations, and the instances of engagement with the peace movement with the goal of averting nuclear war for the good of all humanity certainly fulfilled this role. Although broad moral concerns regarding the threat of nuclear war and the future of humanity were common themes shared by many elements within the wider peace movement, many of the examples of writers' engagement supported by moral obligations were given particular weight by the forms in which they were made. Whether as speeches by prominent individuals, public appeals, or engaged poetry, the special status as engaged writers' words allowed a more direct engagement with some of the more abstract issues of morality in comparison to other parts of the peace movement. This included critiques of militarisation in the Federal Republic, and of the concepts of otherness and inherent confrontation between the Eastern and Western blocs, and was further reinforced by forms of engagement which were uniquely available to writers who therefore took on supplementary positional obligations to fulfil this role with contributions such as the

international dialogues formed in the conferences examined in Chapter 6, or the literary engagement in Chapter 8.

As for the expected role of bearing witness, the four case studies have again shown the central importance of engaged writers' status, expertise, and supporting obligations in relation to the fulfilment of this role. As with the questions of authority, writers were by no means presented as the only group capable of speaking out on particular issues in their contributions to the peace movement, but as the case studies have shown, writers were afforded particular opportunities in the form of public speeches, appeals, and literary works to speak out and foster further discussions using their particular positions as prominent engaged writers, and faced positional obligations to do so meaningfully. Indeed, fostering these wider discussions was a central motivation in the contributions examined in each of the four case studies regardless of the contrasting ways in which these discussions developed, and the specific attitude of bearing witness to troubling events was consistently reinforced by the focus of these acts of engagement as contributions to a protest movement opposed to the troubling threats of militarisation and war.

The final expected role set out for engaged writers concerns their function as irritants, which has also featured prominently in my case studies. As with the factor of detachment, this role is inherently influenced by the fact that the instances of writers' engagement I have examined were with the peace movement, and in opposition to the prevailing military and foreign policies of the Federal Republic, meaning that they can be categorised as inherently fulfilling a critical, irritant function based on both political and positional obligations which defined the position of critical writers in democratic systems

in general, and the Federal Republic in particular. However, the four areas analysed in my case studies have shown a range of more specific interpretations, from directly challenging the efficacy of government policies to raising difficult questions on the themes of war and peace, and even to challenging the authority of the VS leadership in the context of the organisational engagement examined in Chapter 7. While these critical positions placed engaged writers in opposition to the status quo, the distinction between two groups of *Geist* and *Macht* was not as clearly emphasised, largely due to the acts of engagement being undertaken in the context of contributing to the wider peace movement, instead of the independent undertakings of a distinct category of engaged writers. This does not mean that I am arguing that the actions of engaged writers were irrelevant, but rather that the irritant function fulfilled in the four case studies focusses more on their critical engagement with issues relating to the peace movement, rather than presenting a direct, inherent conflict between writers and authority figures.

Although important, the five key roles of engaged writers which have been central to my analysis do not cover every aspect of these figures' engagement. As the case studies have shown, the engagement of writers with the peace movement was undertaken by a variety of individuals across a variety of contexts, using a variety of means. Because of this, not every attitude or act of engagement has fitted neatly into a single category, with many contributions to the peace movement fulfilling multiple roles simultaneously, and others not entirely relating to any of the roles put forward. For instance, many of the forms of direct engagement with protest actions examined in Chapter 5 contained elements of both representative and moral

authority, while the contributions to the conferences analysed in Chapter 6 presented a wide variety of perspectives on the roles of writers across different contexts, many of which blended together the importance of speaking out, bearing witness, representation, and irritant functions in terms of writers' status and expertise in the use of language.

These categories were never intended to provide a strict separation of writers' engagement into discrete areas, but rather to show the expectations and underlying obligations associated with these figures' involvement with the peace movement. As the case studies have shown, these factors proved to be relevant in defining and justifying writers' engagement across these contexts, in terms of these figures' own perceptions of their activities, and their wider effects in the peace movement and beyond.

9.3. Writers' positions in the peace movement

The final area in which conclusions can be drawn from my results lies in the question of the positions of engaged writers in relation to the wider peace movement in the period in question.

Firstly, the cases I have examined have shown that the engagement of writers constituted a contributory rather than a leading role within the peace movement. This position was defined not only by the self-presentation of engaged writers, from the role of one voice among many in direct protest actions to the intention of making a 'Beitrag zum Frieden' through literary work and open discussion in writers' summits, but also by the decentralised structure of the peace movement itself, as the mass mobilisation across broad

support bases precluded the emergence of a single leading influence from any particular group or individual.

As my case studies have shown, this does not mean that the actions of engaged writers in relation to the peace movement were irrelevant. The peace movement in this period was made up of a cumulation of contributing influences by a wide variety of individuals and groups, including engaged writers. These contributions were made in a range of forms across a range of contexts, with the specific expertise and status of the writers in question frequently being used to define and support the forms of engagement undertaken. As such, while the roles of engaged writers can be seen as contributing to rather than leading the development of the peace movement, their contributions were nonetheless distinctive, particularly when supported by the specific roles and obligations unique to engaged writers.

Across my four case studies, I have identified a number of roles which were effectively unique to engaged writers. This includes literary engagement such as the poetry examined in Chapter 8, in which engaged writers not only expressed their own perspectives on issues relating to the peace movement, but also used their own area of expertise in written and published materials to make these contributions. Another unique contribution on the part of engaged writers can be found in the acts of engagement taken on by writers as a professional interest group. This effectively places the engagement of writers alongside other groups such as unions and political parties in supporting the wider peace movement while at the same time adding their own perspectives on the issues at hand, such as the discussions and engagement alongside other European and international writers in the conference series analysed in Chapter

6, or the application of literary imagination to the themes of the wider peace movement examined in Chapter 8.

In addition to these unique forms of engagement specifically undertaken by engaged writers in their professional capacity, my analysis has also highlighted a number of contributions by these figures relating to their prominent public status. These include symbolic roles, as the physical presence of prominent writers in protest actions such as the Mutlangen blockade lent additional gravitas and legitimacy to the demonstrations, along with the more active role of using their status to make distinct contributions, such as the speeches in support of other protest actions examined in Chapter 5, which both raised particular points such as Heinrich Böll's perspective on divisions between governing and governed, and further reinforced other points shared by many other elements of the wider peace movement. Therefore, along with the unique means of literary engagement and perspectives put forward by writers both as professionals and as engaged citizens, an additional distinct contribution on the part of these figures can be seen in the use of their prominent status to support concepts shared by other contributors to the protest movement who were less able to have their voices heard.

Furthermore, individual writers were by no means limited to a single role while making these contributions. As the case studies have shown, figures such as Böll were equally capable of acting in the capacity as a symbolic figurehead, as a participant in open discussion, and as an author taking on themes of war and peace in his engaged poetry. However, in each of these contexts and roles taken on in relation to the peace movement, a common element of engaged writers using their expertise and the means available to

them in order to make a contribution to the peace movement and its ideals can be identified. Moreover, this expertise and status of engaged writers was added to the collective influential force of the wider peace movement in a similar fashion to many of the other social and political groups which supported and added to its mass mobilisation capacity, thereby allowing engaged writers to form one of the many diverse forms of support for the movement as a whole. While this supporting contribution was not necessarily as unique as some other forms of writers' engagement in this period, the importance attached to these acts of support by prominent individuals reveals a final distinct form of influence of writers in the peace movement. Even in the case of the same concept being expressed, additional weight, public presence, and other benefits can be added and a wider audience can be reached by the public support of respected, prominent figures such as the writers examined in my research. This effect was recognised by both the prominent individuals themselves and other elements in the peace movement, and played an important role both in collaborative efforts such as the protest actions analysed in Chapter 5, and the more independent actions of engaged writers examined in my other three case studies. Therefore even in instances of convergence between the messages put forward by engaged writers and the wider peace movement, a particular position can be observed on the part of these figures, drawing both on their expected roles of bearing witness and representing others, and the prominent status on which these roles were based.

The final aspect of writers' positions within the peace movement which must be considered is that the forms of engagement examined over the course of my thesis do not constitute a comprehensive overview of all contributions

and positions taken on by these figures. While my case studies have focussed on four areas which have allowed for analysis of key roles and obligations of engaged writers, not all possible forms of engagement have been analysed here. Additional areas which have not formed part of this analysis include individual, personal contributions to public discussions through means such as open letters and editorial comments, along with more direct forms of political engagement than those seen in my case studies. Additional topics which have not been covered in this analysis include writers' direct involvement in protest actions beyond the 1981 and 1983 examples analysed in Chapter 5, organisational engagement beyond the VS as was touched on in Chapter 7, and literary engagement in prose and other poetic forms not covered in Chapter 8.

Although it has not been possible to cover every possible position taken on by writers in the peace movement, the themes, roles, and obligations which I have analysed across my case studies provide key insight into the forms of engagement undertaken, along with the role definitions and obligations involved in establishing and justifying these positions. As such, these areas should not be seen as gaps in an otherwise comprehensive model, but rather as additional possibilities for future examination.

9.4. Position and contribution of my research to the field

My research has investigated three main areas and the relations between them, namely the West German peace movement in the early 1980s, the roles of engaged writers in this context, and the obligations involved in their engagement. However, I have not conducted this research in a vacuum. As my theoretical framework has shown, my research has been influenced by a range

of theoretical works and analyses in this field, and with the closer analysis in my case studies, I have made my own contributions.

On the general topic of the peace movement, the analyses by Janning, Schmitt, Leif, and others used throughout my thesis have generally agreed on the structure of the peace movement in this period as decentralised and supported by mass mobilisation across broad support spectra, and my conclusions do not aim to overturn this model. However, while the actions of individuals may not have been the driving force behind the development of the peace movement or the defining feature of its protest actions, I identify an important contributory role on the part of engaged writers, with the varied acts of engagement supporting the concept of these figures making a contribution alongside many other groups and individuals in the diverse peace movement, using their areas of expertise and the means available to them. Furthermore, this engagement on the part of writers also reflects the phasic model of the peace movement's development in this period put forward by Janning, showing its application for the particular contributions of engaged writers as well as the general trends of the movement itself. This is demonstrated in particular with a range of direct and indirect forms of engagement throughout the action phase of 1981-1983, and a diversification of engagement as the nominally unified peace movement drifted apart in the period immediately following its 1983 apex of mobilisation and protest activity.

A further contribution to the wider field of research lies in the particular model of the peace movement's 'Wendung in den Nahraum.' In her 2011 analysis of the West German peace movement's development and

strategy in the 1980s, *Der Atomkrieg vor der Wohnungstür*,⁴⁵⁵ Susanne Schregel identifies a key element in the movement's argumentation of drawing attention to the threats of militarisation and preparations for war in specific, easily relatable terms with direct relevance to the everyday lives of citizens of the Federal Republic. As Schregel's analysis shows, this included a range of activities including locally and regionally organised protest actions, direct opposition to the militarisation of civilian spaces, and engagement with the foreseeable consequences of nuclear war. While Schregel's analysis focusses on the membership of organisations within the peace movement and their relation to the general population of the Federal Republic, my research highlights the contribution of engaged writers towards a similar goal, specifically drawing attention to and furthering discussions of the threats of war and nuclear armament, and the efforts to communicate these issues to a wider audience in approachable terms. As my case studies have shown, these forms of engagement drew heavily on the particular positions, status, and obligations of engaged writers, which frequently allowed points to be made by these prominent individuals in ways which were unavailable to other protesters, but at the same time consistently focussed on providing a contribution to the mass mobilised movement rather than an entirely independent action by the individuals concerned.

As with the general roles of engaged writers in the peace movement, I do not presume to claim that these figures single-handedly defined the movement's strategy of relating to the everyday, or that the movement's activities would have been impossible without their engagement. Instead, I

⁴⁵⁵ Susanne Schregel, 'Der Atomkrieg vor der Wohnungstür.

have argued that engaged writers made influential contributions across the varied contexts analysed in its case studies, which served to add the voices of these figures to the diverse support basis which made up the peace movement and facilitated its strategy of relating to the everyday concerns of West German citizens.

The engagement and positions of engaged writers in relation to the peace movement was not however my sole focus. The second important area in which my analysis adds its contribution to the field of research lies in the factor of obligation. As I have shown, a wide range of political, positional, and moral obligations can be seen to have influenced and been used as justification in the varied forms of engagement undertaken by writers in relation to the West German peace movement. As I examined in my theoretical framework, the leading theoretical models of obligation focus on very different areas of activity, from George Klosko's perspective on political and positional obligations defining the roles and behaviour of citizens – particularly their obedience of the law⁴⁵⁶ – to the general moral requirements tied to 'impartial values like justice or happiness' outlined by A. John Simmons.⁴⁵⁷ These theories of obligation treat the issue as either a factor in political theory integral to the orderly functioning of democratic societies, or as an ethical issue concerning the basic mechanics of human behaviour.

In contrast with these models, the obligations I have examined present a different perspective on this issue, in terms of obligations defining non-violent resistance and protest, strictly within a democratic framework. Instead

⁴⁵⁶ Klosko, p. 14.

⁴⁵⁷ Simmons, 'Political Obligation and Authority', p. 28.

of presenting a binary distinction between obedience to the state and rejecting the obligations of citizenship, the forms of obligation put forward in relation to the West German peace movement defined forms of protest voicing concerns and opposition to the military policies of the Federal Republic, but never abandoning the democratic ideals on which the state was founded. Indeed, many of the forms of protest and their associated obligations can be seen to have drawn on these principles, defining the acts of protest and speaking out as a defence of democratic values rather than an assault on them. This perspective is particularly relevant for the contributions of engaged writers, whose legitimacy and ability to exert influence in the Federal Republic was – even in the 1980s – influenced by their pro-democracy and anti-totalitarian positions.

Therefore, the final factor which I have identified in my analysis of the roles of engaged writers in the peace movement in this period lies in the range of political, positional, and moral obligations which were put forward in defining and justifying positions at odds with particular policies of the West German state, but at the same time strongly defending the deeper values of the Federal Republic, including the right to protest.

9.5. Future research

Following the analysis of engaged writers, their obligations, and their positions in relation to the peace movement, one question remains for my thesis: Where do we go from here? What issues examined over the course of my thesis can be taken up in future research?

The death of Günter Grass in April 2015 made front page news, with obituaries and retrospective articles on his career being published around the

world. However, many of these pieces tempered their celebration of Grass's life and works with a reflection on his status as the last of his kind. Grass's passing was seen as the end of an era of engagement which had begun with Émile Zola,⁴⁵⁸ and his continued public presence in his late career had made him 'einer der letzten der engagierten Literaten und Propheten, die in einer längst gewandelten Öffentlichkeit wie Dinosaurier wirkten'.⁴⁵⁹ In short, the relevance of engaged writers was perceived to either be drawing to an end, or already be over, with figures such as Grass remaining as anachronisms in a new age beyond the influence of the Federal Republic's post-war engaged writers. This was particularly evident in some of the more controversial acts of engagement in Grass's later career, such as his critical attitude towards German reunification, and criticisms of Israel in his 2012 poem *Was gesagt werden muss*,⁴⁶⁰ both of which attracted widespread criticism of what was seen as overly moralistic and insufficiently justified public engagement. In the face of these later developments, the forms of engagement with the peace movement in the 1980s analysed here could be seen as a last hurrah for these figures before fading from prominence, as the new age of mass communication, mass mobilisation and new social movements overtook them.

Similar perspectives on the dwindling of engaged writers' influence were also in evidence in the 1980s, as was famously encapsulated in Hans

⁴⁵⁸ Jacques Schuster, 'Der öffentliche Denker', *Die Welt Kompakt*, 16 April 2015 <http://www.welt.de/print/welt_kompakt/debatte/article139616938/Der-oeffentliche-Denker.html> [accessed 6 October 2015].

⁴⁵⁹ Ulrich Rüdenauer, 'Ein Beschwörer Und Mahner', *Zeit Online*, 13 April 2015 <<http://www.zeit.de/kultur/literatur/2015-04/guenter-grass-nachruf/komplettansicht>> [accessed 6 October 2015].

⁴⁶⁰ Günter Grass, 'Was gesagt werden muss', *Süddeutsche Zeitung*, 10 April 2012 <<http://www.sueddeutsche.de/kultur/gedicht-zum-konflikt-zwischen-israel-und-iran-was-gesagt-werden-muss-1.1325809>> [accessed 22 October 2012].

Magnus Enzensberger's note that 'wir haben Heinrich Böll verloren. Aber dafür haben wir Amnesty und Greenpeace'.⁴⁶¹ In contrast to these perspectives, my research has challenged the idea of engaged writers' obsolescence in the context of their engagement with the peace movement in the 1980s. To use Enzensberger's terms, I have argued that the contributions of engaged writers examined across my case studies were not replaced by Amnesty and Greenpeace, but rather were made alongside them, and alongside the many other varied groups and individuals who made up a broad and multi-faceted protest movement. Moreover, my examination of the development of roles and obligations taken on by engaged writers in the Federal Republic has shown how these have changed, either through the actions and perspectives of the figures themselves, or in response to developments in the political and social contexts in which they worked.

From here, three particular avenues for further research are apparent. Firstly, if figures such as Günter Grass can truly be seen as the last of the politically engaged dinosaurs, then the further development of the roles and obligations taken on as part of their engagement and general influence in the thirty years between the instances examined in my thesis and the current day may provide further insight into late developments of this now extinct species.

A second area in which further questions arise lies in the more general perspectives on the positions of engaged writers. I have argued that a wide range of roles and obligations have been involved in writers' engagement with the peace movement, but also that these factors have not remained constant across all contexts or periods. Writers' engagement in the 1960s involved

⁴⁶¹ Enzensberger, *Mittelmass und Wahn*, p. 239.

many different roles and obligations to engagement in the 1970s, which in turn occurred in a different context and involved different obligations in the 1980s. Accordingly, while many of the individual writers whose engagement defined perspectives on the involvement of such figures with social and political issues in post-war Germany are no longer active, the public roles and obligations which they represented may not have entirely vanished. In this case, we may have lost Heinrich Böll and Günter Grass, but the era of individuals influencing public discussion through prominent public engagement supported by obligations may not have been entirely replaced by Amnesty and Greenpeace, particularly in the era of globalisation and social media, in which the barriers to communication with a mass audience are lower than ever before.

The third area of possible further research arising from the issues analysed here concerns the application of political, positional, and moral obligations to instances and groups beyond the context of writers' engagement with the West German peace movement. I have argued that the factor of obligation can be extended beyond the questions of citizenship and ethics, and the theories of obligation analysed here offer additional possibilities in applications to the engagement of groups and individuals other than West German writers, as well as the engagement of these figures with causes other than the peace movement, including environmental, anti-nuclear, and human rights protest movements, among many others.

Therefore, to bring my thesis to its final close, what remains to be said of the roles and obligations of engaged writers in the West German peace movement in the 1980s? I have argued that engaged writers played an influential contributory role, but not a leading one in the development of the

peace movement in this period. I have argued that these roles and obligations were undertaken by a diverse range of individuals, across an equally diverse range of contexts and forms of engagement. I have identified a range of political, positional, and moral obligations as defining and justifying factors in this engagement, but recognise that these obligations were not all-encompassing for every aspect of engaged writers' actions, and were at times just as problematic as they were supportive. Finally, I have put forward my own contributions to the field of research, and shown that many possibilities exist for a further exploration of the themes and factors analysed here.

In short, my research shares some characteristics with the writers' engagement I have analysed. It has taken on a critical examination of its themes, but has not covered all possible aspects of them. It has made a contribution to wider issues, but has not single-handedly defined or redefined the field. It has highlighted a number of key issues, but, as ever, more remains to be done.

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