Making songs in the GDR

Using the example of selected songs by Reinhold Andert.

What was the development and function of Reinhold Andert and his songs in the GDR?

Reinhold Andert (*1944)

- committed songwriter in the GDR
- member of the party SED, the singing group Oktoberklub and the organizational staff of the Weltfestspiele 1973
- intrinsically convinced of the freedom of art
- since 1973: freelance songwriter
- since 1980: ban on performing and publishing



Song culture in the GRD

- 1950s: party-affiliated music based on the songs of the 19th century; songs oriented to ideological norms
- 1960s: first Hootenannys initiated by Perry Friedman
- Kampagne 67: institutional music-making in singing groups
- 1968: mission statemente ,GDR-concrete'
- 1970s: people's needs lead to stylistic opening
- 1978: more repression and strict adherence to ideology

Anderts songs in the GDR

- had several functions in the GDR
- (1) early songs: superficially compatible with GDR ideology; double meaning; criticism of political practice; compromise between state endorsement and preserving his personal convictions
- (2) freelance songwriter: distancing from ideological norms; criticism were communicated more openly; humorous and ironic rhetoric
- demonstrated the ability to combine criticism of the system and acceptance using his rhetoric gift

Im Treptower Park (1973)

- created for the Oktoberklub; published on the record *Reinhold Andert* (1973) in a solo performance
- structured into six-bar phrases; harmonic progression in E-flat major
- melody: prime, second and third → repetitive and replicable
- coded text with many metaphors and critical and affirmative content
- expression of critical segments succeeds due to the preservation of a polite manner, stylistic ease and the open rebuke of the class enemy

So ist ein Pionier (1975)

- created as a freelance songwriter; first published in 1975 as part of the DT64 Politsongs
- introduction with a recitative character; song with four verses; each divided by a refrain
- D-major; a pendulum movement from tonic to dominant; repetitive sequence of notes
- pioneer song; style of the GDR-concrete; symbolizes the desired virtues; seemingly educational character
- level of interpretation: motivation to act independently and to rebel against authority; formulated ironically and openly

Anleitung für Liedermacher (1978)

- published in the songbook *Lieder aus dem fahrenden Zug* (1978)
- departs from Anderts' usual style; dispenses with a recurring refrain and a standardized rhyme scheme
- breaking away from the GDR-concrete style; describes the dilemma of the songwriters in the GDR
- harmonically in F-major and melodically simple \rightarrow text in the foreground; association to a speech
- no complex coding; open criticism of political practice and the increasing control and censorship measures

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